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ABSTRACT

The book discusses participation in secondary education in Europe. The study is based upon a 1975 survey of member states of the Council of Europe and upon a 1973 symposium on pupil participation and co-responsibility in decisions concerning school activities. Presented in eight chapters, the report discusses aims, key points, general tendencies, and future prospects of participation in Austria, Cyprus, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Scotland, Spain, and Turkey. Participation by students, parents, teachers, staff, and interested representatives at the local, regional, and national levels is assessed. The two main obstacles to participation identified in the survey of these countries are authority and lack of communication. Four recommendations are proposed in response to these obstacles: (1) modification of central educational authority, (2) training of potential participants, (3) circulation of information on educational problems, and (4) truer representation of constituencies by parent and student delegates to educational committees. Two basic principles widely proclaimed by participating countries are pupil-centered education and equality of opportunity. The conclusion is that participation is steadily increasing and will continue to increase if unhampered by central educational authorities. Survey questionnaires, replies, and case studies are presented in the appendix. (Author/DB)

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Education & Culture

Participation in education in Europe

by

G. Ferir

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1977

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INTRODUCTION

This consolidated report is based on two series of documents:

a. Documents produced by member states of the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe for a symposium proposed by Belgium (Brussels, 18–24 November 1973). These documents deal with: 1. participation in education: its aims and methods; 2. education for participation (monographs and application to teaching). They were sent to the participants in advance and discussed during the symposium, the discussions being condensed into a general report combining the reports of the two working groups. [1]

This symposium was held in response to a wish expressed by the European Ministers of Education, at a meeting in Versailles in May 1969, who in view of "the importance of pupil participation and co-responsibility in decisions concerning school activities", had invited member governments and international organisations to keep abreast of the problem.

b. Replies received in 1975 from thirteen countries [2] among the twenty-one member states of the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe to a questionnaire (Appendix 1) drawn up at a meeting of experts of the Council. [3]

The first series of documents was covered, either explicitly or implicitly, during the Brussels Symposium and their contents are reflected in the reports of the symposium, at least indirectly. Although the substance of these reports is included in the present report, we have nevertheless made ample use of the basic documents, because they describe the situations in the various countries.

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1. Council of Europe, Strasbourg, Doc. CCC/EGT (74) 24.
2. Austria, Cyprus, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Scotland, Spain and Turkey.
3. Strasbourg, 16-17 December 1974.

We did not wish to present the various national systems simply as outlines, with a mere mention of the names of their governing councils or committees. Such national systems cannot be transferred elsewhere. The ideas underlying them, on the other hand, have international value.

In accordance with this principle, the idea behind the present study has been in the main to locate in the mass of documents aims, key points and general trends, so as to reveal the main resistance and tendencies, and on the basis of this account of the forces involved to assess future prospects and make a few general recommendations.

Some countries have given us much fuller and more specific documentation than others. Some accounts state a whole philosophy of education underlying participation, while others confine themselves to participation in the narrow sense. The replies to the questionnaire also vary greatly in volume, precision and adequacy.

It was not for us to judge the value of systems and situations, and it was not out of mere politeness that we refrained. The scales of values, the levels of aspiration, the national situations and hidden mainsprings differ so much that, in the end, the only common criterion available may be the satisfaction or dissatisfaction felt by each country with its own forms of participation. Little remains but the feeling of success or failure, the sense that things are going well or badly, everything else being unequal.

Another difference that makes comparisons impossible is that the texts submitted sometimes talk about participation as it is desired and sometimes about participation as it is actually experienced (by the writers). The distinction between project, perception and "reality" is not always clear, the images being so confused.

Lastly, the term "participation" is a very elastic one. Sometimes participation starts with the consultation; sometimes it is only regarded as worthy of the name when it means the right of decision. It may involve *all* the people concerned with a problem; or it may relate to concertation between only *a few* of all those concerned. Certain documents use the term for any contribution to a collective piece of work, not specifying whether it was preceded by consultation or by a joint decision.

Obviously all these meanings are possible, but there sometimes seems to be a subtle game of hide-and-seek and it is not always apparent in which sense the word is intended. Apparently not all possible meanings of "participation" are necessarily of a democratic nature or origin. Some situations involving formal particpation may disregard the *whole* and develop and consolidate "apartheid" tendencies.

In order to simplify matters, let us say that when we use the term "participation" outside a quotation we are referring by implication to a model in which democratically elected representatives of two groups (at least) or of all the groups involved in the subject of concertation (at most) discuss common problems at the decision-making level (at most) or the level of consultation (at least).

Our report closely follows the order and contents of the questionnaire.

CHAPTER I

AIMS

Who and what is participation for?

Through all the varied forms of words governments' main concerns seem to be as follows:

1. In some projects the pupil occupies a central position and the education efforts of adults are focused on him. Participation then aims to develop the pupil's intellect and social instincts so as to win him over to "democracy".

2. Other projects are wider, and seek to bring together adults and young people, especially teachers and taught, in beneficial inter-relational situations.

3. Others again are directed to everyone involved in the running of a school, without formal distinction and for social and educational ends.

4. Lastly, some of the aims mentioned see the school as a stimulus and instrument of social change in fields which determine the quality of human relations. This social role is reflected in a number of concrete actions which take place at first inside the school and then if possible outside it.

I. **Participation with regard to pupils**

Participation for the pupil

One aim of participation often mentioned is to develop the pupil's intellect and social instincts. The nature and form of materials used for this purpose are not often explained, but the theoretical goal is clearly to prepare pupils for democracy. It should be added that this word is always employed in a positive sense. But what does it mean

precisely? Sometimes the stress is placed on adaptation to existing democracy (i.e. democracy in familiar form, apparently stable and widely approved: the established society of a country); sometimes interest is in developing the ability to influence democracy (one in process of change: the "society of tomorrow").

The concept of democracy takes two forms: either static existing democracy, to which the pupil has to be adapted, or dynamic democracy always in the making, for which never-ending task, the pupil, regarded as almost the sole object of this process, has to be trained. "Participation in" and "training for" may aim at different targets.

Participation, cause and effect

In order to walk one must first be able to. And how can one without first trying? The same would seem to apply to the relations between democracy and participation. For participation acts through a series of organised situations leading to a democratic vision and system which to some extent already exists as a prior condition for participation. Seen from this angle democracy is always being made and is always changing, and in relation to it participation appears sometimes as a cause and sometimes as an effect.

We would repeat that in this first category of aims it is the pupil whom the adult wishes to guide towards democracy. Nothing is explicitly said about the attitude or attitudes of other participants to this aim of democracy.

Qualities desired

Let us briefly examine what "democracy" means in the documents received. This is often not very clear, although certain elements appear more frequently than others. Even so, it is not easy to know what is meant and included in each case.

The value most often affirmed is responsibility, which is regarded in all the documents as fundamental and for which preparation is nearly always necessary. More precisely, it is the citizen's responsibility for "tomorrow's society", responsibility situated in the future.

The democracy in which the pupil will wish and will be able to participate intelligently when he grows up seems to be regarded almost solely in its strictly political dimension, not as a life style generally applicable to all relationships. The project therefore aims at the adult-to-be (the future citizen) as part of the national community

rather than at the actual young person (the present pupil) already belonging to many smaller groups in his personal everyday life.

Active adaptation in the future

Most countries believe in participation as a means whereby the pupil can adapt himself actively, not be adapted passively.

This is considered to be a future result, and democratic structures and procedures are often regarded as automatically producing a democratic spirit.

Critical spirit – Listening powers – Social and emotive growth – Decisions and information

Incidental to this general project of training the pupil in democracy there are other more fragmentary and instrumental aims concerned rather more with the development of certain all-round abilities which are valued for their general applicability and the particular contributions they can make to the democratic process.

Thus when participation situations lead to genuine team work they train the pupil's intelligence, especially the critical faculty,[1] his listening powers, his respect for other people (to offset his self-assertion), his social emotive growth (to give him a general ability to participate), his capacity for oral expression, his self-confidence and his self-discipline (sense of responsibility towards himself).

Through the tasks which these situations impose, they train people to absorb and handle many kinds of information and thus to take decisions which are better supported by facts and more in line with the opinions of all the other participants.

In general, those teaching methods which call permanently for participation are naturally recommended as being among these most capable of developing the abilities in question.

Persons – Solutions

As we can see, some of the expected results are concerned with individual development and others with finding adequate solutions to problems.

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1. The critical faculty is mentioned several times as a means of resisting all kinds of propaganda.

From the point of view of timing one could say that individual development [1] is a long-term educational result whereas improving the solutions to problems of here and now is a short-term operational result. The two ends are complementary and neither can claim to exclude the other. Without an educational component participation may often be reduced to a mere adjustment of interests. And without concrete results affecting real problems, participation loses its meaning for those who are not inspired by a long-term educational project. Among these are pupils – the very people for whom participation ultimately exists. It is important that those who are thinking about education should keep in mind more or less simultaneously both the long-term and the short-term aspect of participation.

II. Participation with regard to the teacher-pupil relationship

Adults – Young people

A second category of aims is concerned with improving relations between adults and young people. Here the central theme is communication, and we find three preoccupations:

a. *A desire to educate, in the short or long term*

Communication between the protagonists

The subject of education is connected with that of communication if this is seen as indispensable for mutual understanding and the development of the potentialities of the protagonists. Obviously, participation situations provide opportunities for discussion on these problems in life in which the participants are very personally involved, often even physically. Young people and adults then find they are able to approach each other despite very different scales of values. They can do so if both sides have a capacity for formal logic and a desire to reach agreement despite all their differences of outlook and evaluation. Such agreement will free each person – and here is its attraction – from the uncomfortable state of conflict in which the unsolved problem keeps him. This rapprochement between persons of different ages, experience and aims demands that, to some extent at least, they should be able to enter into each others' feelings and converse as individuals, not as figureheads. They must say what they expect of each other, what they have to offer one another and what each

1. Resulting here from research and co-operation on practical problems which are the material for intellectual and socio-emotive training.

considers to be his role in the project under discussion. The effort must be made to distinguish between what is desired and what is possible, between reality as seen by each and – what alone can be used by both – the composite of individual realities.

b. *Anxiety about the (possibly imminent) danger involved if this communication does not take place*

Anxiety: conflict or new relations

Some documents clearly show a degree of anxiety – or lucidity – about the growing dangers of lack of communication between young people and adults. The Brussels Symposium [1] pointed to the risk of grave social conflict facing our society if nothing was done to establish and maintain opportunities for discussion. Some delegates to the symposium thought the danger was imminent.

In view of this anxiety, relations between teacher and pupil in schools need to be radically changed. No workable substitute has yet been found in practice for the old authoritarianism, which all countries say is highly undesirable and anyway impossible to preserve. Yet new attitudes, and thus different kinds of behaviour, on the part of teachers would create an atmosphere that was less threatening and hence more propitious for everyone.

It is finally accepted that certain psychological attitudes and practical knowledge of psycho-sociology make proper communication easier and are an essential background to improved relations.

How can adults and young people live together with a maximum of satisfaction and a minimum of aggression? In what conditions and at what price? A new type of relationship and authority is still in the womb. Its gestation will be long and difficult. What matters is that it should be born in due time.

c. *A practical concern for satisfaction in work*

Satisfaction in work

Three Scandinavian countries particularly emphasise the practical need to increase the satisfaction felt in work. In this respect Denmark, Norway and Sweden stand out from the other countries. They regard participation as a means whereby the parties to it (here teachers and pupils) can influence material and psychological conditions at their place of work (the school). Even the knowledge that

1. On "Participation in education and training for participation", Brussels, 19-24 November 1973.

this influence is possible gives some satisfaction. Awareness of not being entirely at the mercy of things but of being able to intervene actively, and the discovery that one can to some extent control one's immediate work surroundings and make them more pleasant, both tend to increase the sense of motivation, commitment and satisfaction in the teaching staff and pupils.

This ability to make his relation to his job more agreeable must react favourably on a person's efforts and performance. This is amply proved by the more "human" organisation of some business and industrial firms.

III. Participation with regard to general collaboration

Improving general co-operation

A third category concerns the use of participation to improve co-operation between all the parties involved in the school's life. This implies that by participating in the school's practical affairs one comes to take an interest in it. The interest is born of the activity and need not necessarily precede it. The key factor is the influence of the team on its members. [1]

Apart from having a psychological effect on the participants and producing opinions and solutions, team work arouses and develops a desire for commitment and a feeling of personal work and of responsibility towards the school and towards other projects as well. This is a major reason why persons and groups who work in the school or have some responsibility for it – staff, pupil and parents – should be given a share in running it in the form of work teams, initially at discussion level.

Vital importance of information

One condition, however, is mentioned as being indispensable for the success of participation. All the participants without distinction depend on the circulation of information.

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1. The fact of participating in a collective effort, in an atmosphere of understanding and with the sensation that one is helping to bring about something one feels to be important, arouses and sustains interest in the activity itself. One necessary condition is that one should achieve something practical, or at least improve one's personal experience of the problems encountered.

Team work generally provokes reactions both among the members and within each of them; it modifies extremes; and if there is sufficient communication it lessens the feeling of being alone or odd. This releases inner energy for the task in hand and one comes to take an interest in the activity.

Some documents report that this is seriously neglected. Where information is lacking the group merely goes round in circles, becomes discouraged or aggressive and breaks up.

There are several reasons for such lack of information. Sometimes the persons who possess the information prevent it from being passed on, for various motives. But as they cannot always prevent other people from knowing of the existence (even if not the content) of certain information, the end result is tension, questioning of motives, reproaches or loss of interest. No one wants to commit himself to action in which he feels he is being treated with suspicion and thus undervalued and insulted.

In other cases information circulates, or is at least obtainable, but many people do not "receive" it because of lack of time or interest to examine it.

At all events, where ignorance is so widespread among the participants, the outcome of participation is likely to be the collapse of the team, its invasion by those who are "in the know" or disharmony between those who possess the information and those who know nothing but nevertheless claim the right to influence decisions.

Many documents stress the need for as broad a base as possible so that all resources available may be used and the circulation of information assisted in every way possible. In a team any apparent refusal to pass on information immediately spoils relationships.

Communication: a fundamental need

To improve the relations between all the partners involved is the most basic of all aims, because achievement of the others depends on it. Even if this aim were the only one to be pursued it would alone justify participation, for the results of achieving it affect all school work. To reach this goal communication between the parties concerned is essential.

Transforming the school into an educational community

The aim here is to create a real community (not merely a structured entity) of all the participants, which will be educational in so far as the feeling of positive inter-relation, of solidarity, creates a sense of responsibility among the members with due respect for their personalities.

Through discussion, participation activities tend to transform people's mentalities and thus the deep-seated attitudes of each person towards the others and himself and so towards values and responsibilities as well.

IV. Participation with regard to the school as a nucleus for social education

The school integrated in present-day social life

Participation is in the interests of the school as a dynamic institution among whose functions in the modern world is one of social education. One preoccupation underlying the use of participation for this purpose is how the school and the world – in which the school must be integrated, not encysted – are mutually to strengthen and enrich their relationship.

This relationship is seen in terms of practical collaboration for purposes of mutual aid. The implication is that the liaison could be provided by parents and representatives of the out-of-school world.

The leading part played by the school is sometimes clearly expressed. But, it is added, the school, being aware that it has this mission among others, must not confine itself to "teaching" and regarding itself as the natural custodian of knowledge. It too must be receptive to contributions from outside.

There will be discussion between the teachers and all the "others", so that actions may be decided on jointly. The school is thus a social and educational centre spreading its influence into the surrounding community and in turn being influenced by it. Its role is to give and take, to adapt itself in order to adapt others to itself: two tasks in one.

Mass media – Active leisure pursuits

As regards the fields in which participation can be applied, the documents frequently mention: 1. the analysis and structuration of information received from the mass media; and 2. an introduction to active leisure pursuits, with the creation of situations likely to develop creativity in childhood.

Multilateral effects

The above social aim reflects a desire to face present-day realities and its achievement will entail extensive adjustments to the

infrastructure, budgets and regulations. Even now, however, participation situations provide opportunities for discussion in which the school gives and receives information and social stimuli. Such situations have long-term effects in as much as they will create a liking for this type of encounter and develop the habit of them. The next step might be to devise practical social activities, decided upon and organised jointly with various representatives of the out-of-school world.

The aims stated, divided into the four above-mentioned categories, seem to be dominated by two main concerns:

1. A desire to make the best possible use of an instrument for developing the capacities necessary for raising the quality of life.

These capacities seem to be as follows:

a. certain socio-emotive qualities that make genuine co-operation possible,

b. a critical faculty.

In other words, clear-sighted generosity prepared for action.

2. A desire to put the school's creativity to work on the school's own destiny, so that the school, with its pupils, becomes master instead of mere victim of its fate. This involves a technique for self-awakening and becoming aware, leading if possible to a lucid sense of responsibility.

CHAPTER II

LEVELS AND AREAS OF PARTICIPATION

I. The national level

Nearly all countries have specific national groups, some representing teachers and others parents. These groups are consulted officially or try by various forms of pressure to influence final decisions (ministerial or regional). Each group acts sometimes singly and sometimes in co-operation.

In the documents at our disposal we can find only three countries (Denmark, Luxembourg and Malta) which mention the existence of a national participation council of representatives of the various groups of partners.

Luxembourg has a Conseil supérieur de l'Éducation nationale which includes teachers, parents and representatives of the economy and society.

Malta has an Advisory Council for Education comprising persons whom the Minister considers representative of the opinions of parents, teachers, trade unions, industrialists and the Catholic Church.

Denmark has set up a committee (RUGU) to study the problems of teaching the 16–19 age-group. The fundamental theme is curriculum reform. Parents are not represented on it.

Teachers [1] are found everywhere in committees set up to study and work out curricula for the competent Minister's approval. It is chiefly through this channel that teachers exert influence.

Parents, combined in societies or federations, [2] are consulted nationally on educational problems and also act as a pressure group on ministerial decisions.

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1. Members of professional organisations in the widest sense or of trade unions for the defence of the material and financial interests of their members.

2. Except for Norwegian parents.

II. The regional/local level

Some countries, such as Switzerland and Spain, have systems of geographically limited consultation, the results of which are subject to the same limitation. Spain mentions activity by a large number of associations which inform the Minister of the region's educational wishes.

The teachers seem to be most involved, and the documents speak of them alone.

Switzerland has consultation within and between the cantons, and the teachers' associations have set up a conference which is regularly consulted by the Conference of Cantonal Directors. The teachers' influence can also be seen from the fact that they may stand for election to cantonal parliaments and to various committee posts.

At the local level teachers' influence varies. They do not often have the right to vote.

III. The school level

Participation at national level is concerned with fundamental medium-term choices. In schools it is concerned with practical problems peculiar to each of them. In the former case participation is a matter of guidance and in the latter of decision-making. At the school level, in fact, participation is concerned with specific local problems which need to be clarified and solved (in the short term at least). But it achieves more than this; through some of the conditions under which it works, such as the frequency of meetings on a common task, it gradually changes people's mentalities. It then becomes educational in its nature.

The general school concertation body

This managing or administrative body has various names, but in all countries it comprises at least the head teacher and representatives of teachers, pupils and parents. There may also be representatives of staff other than the teaching staff and of the local community (political, cultural and commercial).

Election – Numbers – Ambivalence

As a rule all representatives are elected by democratic procedures. There is usually an equal or nearly equal number of people

elected by the three main groups (pupils, teachers and parents). In all the groups everywhere there is a desire both to co-operate in solving common problems, and to ensure more actual power than any of the other parties in the event of disagreement. Ambivalence being the rule, it is certainly present in schools' general concertation bodies.

The parties involved

Who are they? What do they want? What do they reject? What do they fear?

a. *The head teacher*[1]

His position is a difficult one, for while he is supposed to facilitate the working and "production" of the general concertation body in his school, he still bears the general responsibility.

Some head teachers, moreover, tend — and this is a very understandable reaction — to equate the school's reputation and standing with their own. Community and personal affairs then become indistinguishable. The individual is identified with his function and status.

Sometimes the head teacher faces very vigorous protest. There is then an obvious confrontation of relative forces and a war of nerves. As one group's or even one representative's image of the school, of others and of itself differs greatly from that of another group or representative, the implicit differences of standpoint sometimes lead to open conflict. Such situations are untraditional, and the head teacher is not always prepared for this kind of encounter; he may not be accustomed to such rough treatment in his professional field or have the techniques to deal with it.

In other cases the head teacher has to fight against apathy, absenteeism or a dearth of subjects which the parties consider worth discussing. He is trying to carry a very heavy burden alone.

The fact is that the demands made on him by his job have changed so swiftly to such an extent that he finds it difficult or even impossible to adapt himself. And yet it is up to him to create a climate in which participation can prosper.

b. *The teaching staff*

Little information has been received on teachers' experience of participation in schools. Often, however, they are suspicious of

1. See also "The head teacher" in the section on "Decision-making".

parents, who are sometimes regarded as intruders with little or no competence in school affairs. Here too there are differing ideas about rights and functions (different models), quite apart from the fact that teachers feel rather insecure about their work in view of questioning of its educational and social dimensions.

The part played by teachers in encouraging participation in classrooms (by appropriate teaching methods) can often be seen to be fundamental and irreplaceable.

Where secondary schools have diminished in number and increased in size their organisation has had to become subtle and complex. Some problems are delegated to deputy head teachers. Similarly, certain teachers are given promotion in order to plan and take stock regularly of the running of the school (in Scotland, for instance). In schools or countries (such as the United Kingdom) which make provisions for a large number of extra-curricular or out-of-school activities, understanding and co-operation between teachers and pupils are greatly facilitated. This is true of participation situations in general. Ireland is considering the possibility of including teachers on the boards of state schools.

c. *The pupils*

Pupils are mainly interested in problems of discipline (teacher-pupil relations), extra-curricular or out-of-school activities (sporting, cultural or social) and organising the work in the way they find most satisfying.

Like parents, they make very little use of their theoretical opportunities for participation, and this is apparently due to "their lack of preparedness and the resistance put up by certain authoritarian grown-ups" (Spain). They usually show little interest in participation as it exists or as they believe it to exist.

In countries in which young people are more politically-minded (particularly France and the Federal Republic of Germany), political pressures from outside the school clearly influence the working of participation groups. This cuts both ways. Some German pupils who are members of regional pupils' associations make it their business to put forward constructive proposals on important academic questions.

At the Brussels Symposium the English-speaking group strongly urged the need for what it called a sub-structure for participation. This would consist of frequent meetings, whether official or not, for

the benefit of members of each group, especially the pupil group. If this is not achieved the principal meetings (of the general school concertation body, the superstructure) lose much of their democratic character. These two levels are essential for all aspects of activities, relationships and decisions. If there are no proper links between them, the superstructure can easily give rise to authoritarian practices.

d. *The parents*

This is a very heterogeneous group. At the "summit" parents are organised into councils or associations ... with action programmes aiming at certain goals. Such a structured unit is a motor, a stimulant, a constructive force in providing aid, collaboration and initiative. It tends to co-operate ... rather than agitate. The "base" is said to be apathetic and indifferent, even acting as a brake upon change ...[1]

The reticence of parents:

Although parents are represented in most of the general school concertation bodies, their role is usually a modest one. They lack the essential information. Their children depend to some extent on the teachers who, moreover, are rather suspicious of parents. So it is not surprising that parents are somewhat reticent, out of ignorance and caution.

The big problem here is lack of information. What are the possibilities, the precedents, the various resources, the regulations, the school's educational aims, the precise wishes of the parents themselves with regard to their children, and so on and so forth? All this remains vague or unknown.

"Changes in curricula and teaching aids tend to set parents at a distance from the school situation, and they come to regard themselves as increasingly estranged from an educational process which bears no resemblance to the one they knew as children. The officers of parents' associations usually come from a social and cultural background that has time and information at its disposal; but a general lack of interest among families is observed."[1]

One gains the general impression that parents owe it to themselves morally to participate, but in view of their ignorance about school problems the role usually given them is to receive information,

1. Brussels Symposium, 18-24 November 1973.

not to make any specific contribution. Parent-school relations seem to concern instruction (intellectual knowledge) rather than upbringing (the whole personality). The school has the advantage, and in addition to its task of instruction it seeks, somewhat painfully and diffidently, a wider scope concerned not only with the intellect but with the intelligence and emotions. The idea that school subjects are means rather than ends in themselves is sometimes lost sight of.

Knowledge may be for its own sake, for the sake of action more in keeping with its aims, or for the sake of a more harmonious personal and social development. But in practice these three goals are not always identified and recognised as distinct. Thus parent-school contacts are often distorted by misunderstandings.

Specific contributions: one role of parents is to supply information about their children as *persons*, not as *pupils*. This picture, blended with the one the teachers have of the same child or adolescent as a pupil, makes it possible to work out projects more rationally, in whose realisation parents, teachers and the children or adolescents themselves will play complementary parts.

It sometimes happens that the representatives of parents play "an extremely important part" through a "school committee" on which they are in the majority (Switzerland).

e. *Non-teaching staff*

It is unanimously agreed that the presence of persons working in the school in some capacity other than teacher (administrative staff, para-medical staff, welfare officers, workmen etc.) is necessary at general meetings dealing with:

– problems directly connected with their work;

– the general policy of the school, of which they are full members.

IV. **In the classroom**

The documents say that it is here that participation has the greatest educational influence. One slight qualification is that only pupils and teachers are involved.

Active participation methods

Active teaching methods involve teachers and pupils in such tasks as preparing curricula in detail and carrying them out, choosing

procedures, techniques and methods, deciding about independent work (to be performed alone or in teams), devising collective projects and sometimes fixing times for tests and making joint assessments.

In the Scandinavian countries, particularly Sweden, participation in the classroom is quite usual. Pupils often work alone on "study projects". The teacher first explains the general outline of the project and the means available for carrying it out. The work is then done in groups, and finally the teacher and pupils assess the results. The pupils participate in: 1. planning the year's work; 2. planning each individual's programme in each study project; 3. choosing methods of work; 4. making assessments with a view to future work. Points 2 and 3 are in general application in secondary schools. Finland reports that sometimes a "class council" (of pupils and the form teacher) takes the initiative and makes practical proposals to the higher council.

Training of teachers

The first way of training pupils for participation is through teaching. That is how pupils must learn to express themselves and to develop their curiosity and reasoning powers. Active teaching, independent work, examples of teamwork given by teachers are all training exercises in participation. To some extent pupils should be able to choose their own subjects of study and classes, probably from the age of 14 onwards. [1]

Such teaching entails an adequate training of teachers. In many countries their initial training is still being adjusted, and sometimes changed by hit-and-miss methods. Teachers and pupils are often being trained simultaneously and haphazardly as regards their attitudes to participation.

1. Brussels Symposium, 18-24 November 1973.

CHAPTER III

GENERAL SCHOOL CONCERTATION BODIES

I. Fields of competence

Relationships

These bodies deal mainly with questions of relationships (e.g. drawing up the internal regulations for each school and keeping them under review), disciplinary matters and relations between the school and the outside world, especially in the cultural and social fields. As a rule they are concerned with general problems (affecting a large number of persons involved in the school's life though often in a specific context).

They seem often not to make full use of the means at their disposal. Although they are frequently dissatisfied with outside regulations, they rarely make requests or appeals to the central authority or offer it advice. They do not always utilise the machinery provided by law for expressing opposition.

II. Structures

Wherever such a body exists, it comprises, in addition to the head teacher or his deputy, representatives of: 1. the pupils, 2. the teaching staff, 3. the non-teaching staff,[1] 4. the parents, in more or less equal numbers. Sometimes there are also representatives of the local community in the broad sense, in order to keep the school open to the outside world.

Elections

In view of the large number of pupils and parents, the elections for these two groups are nearly always carried out in two stages. In

1. Their representatives are sometimes included in the "teaching staff" group.

the case of the pupils, each class elects one or two delegates, who in their turn elect the pupils' representatives to the school's concertation body. By a similarly democratic method, the parents elect a number of delegates who elect from among their number as many representatives as are permitted for their group in the concertation body.

For the teachers' group the elections are carried out in one or two stages depending on the total number of teachers employed at the school. The representatives of this group sometimes feel outnumbered by the pupils' and parents' representatives.[1] In April 1975, the French-speaking area of Belgium decided to increase slightly the permitted number of teachers' representatives, seeing that this number includes, in addition to teachers, the delegates of the auxiliary school staff, the paramedical staff and technical staff.

National situations

Danish secondary schools have, as well as classroom participation, a rather elaborate structure of compulsory participation comprising a "teachers' council", a "pupils' council",[2] a "joint parents-teachers committee"[3] and a "co-operation committee".

The co-operation committee, which is the Danish concertation body, comprises the head teacher, the chairman of the teachers' council, two teachers, the chairman of the pupils' council and two pupils. It provides liaison between the head teacher, the teaching staff and pupils. Parents are not represented on it.

The *French* system divides the delegates of five groups as follows: 1. the school's administration one sixth, 2. various kinds of staff employed in the school two sixths, 3. parents one sixth, 4. pupils one sixth, 5. local authorities and persons concerned in the school's affairs one sixth. This "conseil d'administration" may appoint a disciplinary board from among its members.

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1. The number of representatives for each of the three groups being equal.

2. The Department of Secondary Education (upper grade) issued a circular on 4 September 1968 on the organisation of the "pupils' councils". "They shall be the official representatives of pupils in their relations with the school, its head teacher, its teaching staff and the public."

3. Compulsory in all primary and secondary schools (1970 Act). Of the three or five members (depending on the size of the school), one is elected by the municipal council from among its members and the two or four others by the parents. The head teacher, the chairman of the teachers' council and a representative of the pupils' council also attend meetings without the right to vote. The main function of the joint committee is to "supervise the running of the school and ensure that the pupils participate satisfactorily in its activities".

III. Levels of schooling at which participation is beneficial

The general opinion is as follows:

a. *In teaching methods*

Participation is beneficial to children even at the pre-school stage. It is at this stage that a certain kind of relationship can best develop between teachers and taught. [1]

At this age the child is extremely receptive; he goes through a stage of intense capacity for learning stimulated by the environment. Participation situations therefore exert a profound and indelible influence on him.

Consequently, participation situations must be offered *as early as possible* in life. We now know that the psycho-physiological aptitudes of children under the age of 5 or 6 have been greatly underestimated. If given favourable circumstances for co-operation with adults, most of these children can reach levels of knowledge and ability which were thought to be possible only for much older children. Participation in teaching methods should of course continue throughout schooling.

Leisure pursuits have been mentioned as greatly helping to develop a climate of participation.

b. *In structured forms*

The minimum age generally quoted is 14 or 15 years, i.e. in upper secondary schools. But a start can be made before this age (England). In general, therefore, structured forms can be built up and set to work as soon as children begin to feel the need for a form of organisation (Sweden). Italy and Turkey even say that a child can perform effectively within such structures from the age of 8.

No doubt there are considerable differences between the structured forms the various countries have in mind.

Conclusion

Without going into more detail, we may note that

1. *all* countries advocate classroom participation from the earliest age;

2. most of them consider participation to be beneficial in structured forms at the beginning of the upper secondary stage.

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1. And between teachers and the children's parents.

CHAPTER IV

DECISION-MAKING

Who decides what? And about whom? Let us examine the question in the context of *a.* relations between the central authority and the schools, and *b.* each school's general co-operation body.

I. As between central authority and school

From the various national statements with regard to structures and operational directives a number of common features emerge which constitute a basis for these divergences. These common points relate to:

- "basic elements"
- methods and assessments
- social and cultural activities.

A. *Common points*

a. *Basic elements*

These concern mainly the *general aims* of education, the various *branches of learning* and their curricula and the *structures* within which education takes place.

These basic elements are everywhere determined by the competent Minister, who before taking his decisions consults one or more working parties appointed to study the problem in question and to offer advice. Two countries have special situations. In England the central government delegates practically all its powers to local education authorities (local government bodies). These in turn very often leave matters to head teachers, while retaining an ultimate right of supervision. The degree of independence which the local education authority gives its schools varies considerably. In the Federal Republic of Germany, the School Association has to approve the school

regulations or any educational experiments, as well as building costs. Thus a right of veto is recognised in certain matters.

b. *Methods and assessments*

The teachers decide on teaching procedures. It is up to them to work out the "how" (operational aims, techniques, methods). More and more often this work takes account of the results of some degree of informal consultation and negotiation with pupils.

It is the teachers who assess the pupils (by various systems) and thus decide their future schooling.

c. *Social and cultural activities*

Countries have incorporated such activities in the daily lives of their schools in highly varying degrees. The Scandinavian countries and the United Kingdom give them a bigger place than do other countries, where they occupy a fringe position as extra-curricular or out-of-school (rather than "school" pursuits).

B. *Decision — Co-decision — Independence*

a. *Decision-making*

Relations between the central authority and schools are dominated by the idea of authority, which is generally accepted in principle but just as often contested in many of its practical applications. A large number of the general school concertation bodies accordingly claim the right to wider powers of decision, increased independence and a broader area of "conditional freedom".

b. *Co-decision*

The problem of co-decision arises both within the general concertation bodies and between them and the central authority. Similar claims (to obtain or preserve this right) are made at different levels and between different groups of protagonists, but the basic psychological mechanisms remain the same.

Management committees in schools often feel they have no influence over important decisions (see "Basic elements" above). Even if the right of co-decision exists in certain respects, it does not cover what are regarded as essential matters. Some groups wonder whether the final result of the work of local committees is worth the trouble involved.

c. *Independence*

Between the two extremes of matter-of-cause submission and radical attack there is room for claiming more independence through a degree of decentralisation. Some countries say that participants will commit themselves only on this condition. Others point to the danger of a multiplicity of different forms, including a new unbridled school elitism. But it is just as dangerous to try to preserve a centralised system unchanged in a changing age.

The problem has not been settled, but there is a general movement towards independence. What it entails remains to be seen.

C. *The head teacher*

It is interesting to examine here the intermediate position of the head teacher. He is placed sometimes precariously, between the central authority and his school's general concertation body. Although he is a member of that body, he has a status, role and responsibility of his own. He is the only member of his category on that body. He has to ensure that the limits imposed by the central authority are observed: decisions validly taken by authorised persons in a permitted field can only be carried out if ratified (i.e. acknowledged to be in accordance with regulations) by him. He thus has an omnipresent right of veto, as a safeguard for official requirements and prohibitions.

His powers and responsibilities

Traditionally such a function carries with it the idea of a high degree of authority (in this context, independence) within the school. What is the present position?

Legally, the head teacher's independence has in general been little affected by participation. But in practice his authority is far less readily accepted. His *de jure* authority no longer carries acceptance of *de facto* authority.

In most countries the head teacher has a vote in all matters which come up for discussion. As he is responsible for seeing that the central authority's dictates are observed, it is he who has the last word. The other parties may however appeal against his decision to the competent Minister.

D. *National situations*

It is in England that his power is greatest. That country's document nevertheless reports growing dissatisfaction among teachers,

who through their national union have since February 1972 been urging the need for them to have a greater share in the running of schools. Initially they ask only that they should be compulsorily consulted. They thus show more faith in concertation than in confrontation from legal positions demanded as a prerequisite.

In the Federal Republic of Germany one point now being considered at *Land* level is the role of teachers' councils in electing the head teacher.

Norway stresses the importance of the personality of the head teacher, whose area of authority "has not been appreciably diminished by the establishment of the various participation bodies". He is thus entitled to disregard advice given by pupils, parents or teachers.

In Finland the head teacher is in the position of an "executive authority". One of his main tasks is to ensure the legality of decisions taken jointly with the school council, to which he reports. Evidently part of his former authority has passed to this council.

Unusual cases are two Norwegian upper secondary schools, whose main authority is the general assembly, and the Copenhagen independent grammar school, where all decisions of general concern are taken by the general assembly. Each member of this assembly has a vote and the head teacher confines himself to ensuring that the decisions taken comply with the Minister's regulations. This system pleases the pupils, who almost everywhere favour a "direct democracy" style of procedure.

II. In general school concertation bodies

A. *Differences — Disputes*

Our deep-seated self-centredness, the variety of our individual desires, the disparities in our scales of values and our differing perceptions of personal interests or "indisputable rights" invest the problem of the right of decision [1] in general school co-operation bodies with an emotional charge that is sometimes enormous. This is apparent both in those who possess the right — who vigorously affirm good reasons for having it — and among those who would like to possess it — who with equal vigour affirm other good reasons. While their aims and interests coincide in the long run (being "all in the same boat"),

1. Strange as it may seem, the "right of decision" is not always understood, at this level, as a "right of co-decision".

in the short term these are often felt to differ widely. They are indeed both felt and defended, for short-term motivation is more spontaneous, more direct, more stimulating and nearly always more powerful than long-term incentives.

There is sometimes a lack of coherence and realism between thought and deed, between demands and actual behaviour. While there is a strong tendency to exert as much influence on decisions as possible, there is not always a comparable inclination towards the sometimes long and arduous task of studying complex general problems, which are often reduced to simple personal ones.

Teachers and pupils prove to be the two most dynamic categories. The Scandinavian countries and the United Kingdom, perhaps because they are more used to concertation procedures, lay far less stress on the need for: 1. a clear division between decision-making and consultation, and 2. an exhaustive list of subjects which may or may not be discussed.

The general co-operation bodies are as a rule fairly flexible. All the groups represented have the right of co-decision, but they cannot always exercise it at the same time and in the same matters.

B. *Participation = Consultation? Decision*

Opinions given spontaneously or on request come under the heading of consultation, which is the basic level of participation. Without consultation there is no participation.

Some consider "true" participation to start only with the right of decision; others regard it as being effective even at the consultation stage.

Legally speaking, there is a clear distinction between decision and consultation. Obviously, the right to be consulted and give one's opinion is much less than the right of decision (on one's own) or co-decision (with others). In practice, however, the dividing line is less clear, for we do not act according to purely legal definitions. No human being capable of forming relationships is totally impervious to outside influences. Even if not all parties have the right of co-decision, consultation can have some effect, for no one listens to others without being to some extent influenced by them. This really means listening however, not mere defensive hearing. Yet in the long run there is always a certain intermixture of opinions. Even if, superficially, attitudes harden on contact with each other, at a deeper level, and in the longer run, they quietly interpenetrate. It is because

of this law of relationships that consultation is more effective in fact than it appears to be in law.

An overall view

An overall view of national situations indicates that:

1. In relations with the central authority there is a clear-out difference between the "northern" and "southern" countries with regard to demands for the right of decision. In the north people are, or claim to be, less clamorous than in the south. To explain this it would be necessary to analyse the circumstances surrounding the phenomenon. Whether the description fits the facts or not, it seems that the levels of aspiration to a right of decision are not the same in all countries. The decision-consultation problem exists everywhere. It becomes more acute the further south one goes.

2. Wherever general school concertation bodies do not yet exist (and such cases are rare), governments are in the process of setting them up at different levels. There is a general move to set up participation machinery.

3. Most general school concertation bodies are essentially consultative. Their powers of decision are generally very limited. They exert their influence by giving reasoned opinions.

CHAPTER V

RESISTANCES – OBSTACLES

I. Resistances (persons)

This report does not seek to paint a rosy picture of participation situations. Their educational potential is not necessarily realised by existing circumstances, people, or facts of life in or out of school.

Participation implies a profound change in attitudes and behaviour. Even when it is sincerely desired in principle, its introduction naturally puts the participants on the defensive, for they are always wary of change. Former certainties are shaken, and existing school systems collapse under outside blows and pressures. To acknowledge this fact with our reason does not mean that we are ready emotionally to take here and now to something new, unfamiliar, untried and "threatening".

Hopes and fears

What do we hope to gain from participation? What do we fear to lose by the change? Our behaviour will vary between attack and defence according to whether we feel entitled to claim new ground or in danger of losing some of the ground we have. A coercive element hitherto unperceived suddenly emerges as part of the relationship. All relations have their more or less perceptible or conscious aggressive side. This is what makes us fight to obtain satisfaction, to impose our "wills", of which we may or may not be aware. Nothing is entirely "gratuitous", without an underlying motive which is sometimes unconscious. Beneath our good intentions we are motivated by self-interest, whether ill advised or well advised.

What gain (material or otherwise) do we expect? What loss (material or otherwise) do we fear? What advantage do we hope to retain? However self-centred these considerations may be, they nonetheless play a genuine and active part in human relations –

though with differing degrees of plainness, courtesy and conscious awareness – and thus in some of the negotiations which participation entails.

Basic problems

Two groups of problem emerge wherever the question of participation arises. There are always problems of *communication,* and where there are differences of opinion there are problems of *authority*.

A certain number of situations and techniques may greatly improve communication. Success is not guaranteed, but it is achieved in most cases. But to organise such readaptation takes time, money and a sufficient number of willing people if the operation is to be viable.

The problems of authority are more difficult to cope with, if only because of the open or hidden fear and aggressivity they engender. Formerly, authority was regarded as consisting primarily in the power to impose something (or oneself). Even when this power aroused displeasure and protest it was not diminished or fundamentally contested, the holder of the authority being regarded more as a symbol than as a person. His status was automatically recognised and thus obedience was a matter of course.

Today the situation is plainly very different everywhere. In fact, it is often the opposite of what it was. It is therefore all the more difficult to change, being rooted in the same deep and irrational strata of the personality. To reject dependence does not always lead to independence but often only to counter-dependence: one man says white because the other says black.

How do the protagonists work together in participation situations?

A. *Pupils*

Pupils are frequently presented as falling into two main categories. They are said to have different underlying attitudes (faith or scepticism) which they express by opposite modes of behaviour (assertiveness or indifference).

The former make use of their immediate advantages to be very demanding thus revealing their faith in the ability of participation to yield as much as they claim. The latter behave with indifference, and thus show their lack of faith in participation (and/or perhaps of adults in general).

Assertiveness is more of a problem than indifference and is encountered more frequently.

Assertive pupils

Assertive pupils clash frequently with the other protagonists. They clamour loudly for rights and liberties and are said to be less ready to offer their co-operation, partly because they lack an overall view of the problems being discussed. Freedom is demanded as an end in itself (not as a means to an end), implying freedoms in the plural. Finland reports that pupils' organisations seek to increase to the maximum the operation of participation and its impact on the school.

Indifferent pupils

Indifferent pupils, or at least those who appear so, are often caught up in the wide movement of opposition to established forms, whatever they may be. They are only negatively interested in participation. They regard it simply as an instrument to influence them, a thinly veiled way of "recovering" or "manipulating" them; in short a form of "anti-education"; a conspiracy by the old against the young; a piece of bluff to trap the unwary, since they are denied the right to decide on the things which interest them. "Talking doesn't do any good." At most they are left extra-curricular or out-of-school activities and social and cultural matters. For the rest, "the whole thing is cooked". The subjects they are allowed to discuss do not strike them as important enough for them to feel really involved.

This category of pupils seem to take an all-or-nothing attitude. They fear any campaign to persuade them, without believing in any campaign in which they might do the persuading subject. The power of decision and that of co-decision are often confused.

Of course they are wrong, but let us admit that if they can only make themselves heard without ever having their demands met, because the answer is regulated once and for all, then "democracy" and "participation" are only empty words.

Unfavourable circumstances

Secondary school pupils mature rapidly and this has an unsettling effect on groups and organisations of young people, their members being only transitory and without any influence on important decisions. This constant movement of pupils tends to create in many of them "an obvious lack of any sense of commitment or social responsibility, or of the effort that is essential if they are to acquire the

information necessary for constructive participation" (Switzerland). To say nothing of lack of time.

Another sensitive subject is that of *representation*, which in particular involves problems concerning:

1. the actual election (the indirect method of election is often contested), [1]

2. contact with the electorate,

3. the period of office. [2]

In practice all these questions are closely bound up with that of infrastructure (premises and means of circulating information) and timetables.

It is understandable that the pupils, being members of the "youth" group, cannot be equable protagonists in the present division of society. They are not merely surrounded by contradictions, as adults are; they absorb them much more. They are pulled in all directions by them, sometimes painfully. Adults, to whom they unconsciously turn for a sense of security, appear to be anxious and puzzled, constantly hesitating between an obsolete past and an uncertain future.

Are they to weep among the ruins or embark on the problematical quest for a new Grail (but where are the modern knights?) or do nothing but live from one day to the next? Regrets, worries, discouragement and aggressivity provide the daily background, against which the young find little encouragement in their elders. The past is well and truly dead. As for the future ... What future? Will there be a future? At least a viable future?

This being so, the "indifference" of many young people is sometimes merely a cloak for despair. They are in two minds not only about adults but also about participation. They are constantly afraid of being treated as "things", and so they habitually tend to regard any attempt to influence them, and thus any education as manipulation.

There are thus three types of behaviour:

– rebellion, with aggressive rejection of every proposal, since it comes from the "system" (i.e. authority as it exists in their imaginations);

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1. Many pupils reject the principle of representation and want "a system of direct democracy in which everyone can speak for himself" (Italy). A large number of Swedish pupils, too, would like direct democracy and general assemblies in which each pupil could explain his views personally.

2. Do the elected pupils risk becoming part of the Establishment?

– non-commitment, out of scepticism or caution (fear of negative judgement by their peers);

– utilitarianism, playing the game on the surface while trying to derive the maximum advantage.[1]

It is only when they can make reassuring contacts that this feeling of being manipulated fades and genuine co-operation develops.

B. *Teachers*

Overtime work

The reports suggest that it is at this level that resistance to participation is most widespread. The 1973 Brussels Symposium stated that teachers felt that certain pressures from the responsible authorities inhibited sincere involvement in a participation scheme, and that from the material point of view they regarded their co-operation as unpaid extra work.

Hostile tradition in certain countries

Teachers are indifferent, reticent or hostile towards any system which does not guarantee them a power of decision in questions they regard as crucial. It matters little in this respect whether the system is of the old style or involves participation. They thus take advantage of the meetings to state trade union positions. The individualistic traditions of certain countries and the united front against participation by pupils and parents hamper or even neutralise any participation system whose sterility is then denounced as having no connection with the people directly involved. Being proud and independent in their profession, teachers often feel the presence of new parties to be an encroachment on their preserves. They do not yet see it is part of their duties to act as "animateurs" or assume responsibility for the pupil's overall upbringing (France).

Finland reports that its teachers' organisations and political right wing fear that "too much" participation by pupils may involve the schools in politics. At the actual meetings the teachers distrust the representatives of the parents even more than those of the pupils.

Teachers in the English-speaking and Scandinavian countries adopt far less defensive positions than those elsewhere. Habits, standards and patterns are different and more attuned to co-operation.

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1. It seems to be adults far more than young people who adopt this third type of behaviour.

England states, however, that certain teachers have the impression that the legal position of pupils is stronger than their own.

For them but without them

The teachers' reserve is due to the feeling they have of being more or less compelled to obey and thus to run the risk of failure (thereby losing their self-respect and the respect of others), whereas they acquired a certain ease of operation, not always without difficulty. And all this happens in front of colleagues who represent the "group standards", which like all group standards are conservative.

The following passage illustrates the misgivings of teachers about the reforms in general:

"When it comes to actually putting the reforms into effect, success or failure depends on the attitude of teachers. Now in most of the schemes worked out by the innovators everything seems to suggest that the intention is to act *on* the teachers: *for* them, no doubt, but rarely *with* them. This attitude of technocratic paternalism based on distrust engenders distrust in return. In present circumstances it is not internal reforms which teachers as a whole resist: the conditions in which they are presented to them, not to say imposed on them, give offence. Hence the importance of *associating educators actively* in any attempt at reform in their field." [1]

C. *Head teachers*

Fears

A large number of head teachers fear for:

– Their responsibility. Being very restricted by a central administration which retains nearly all the powers of decision, head teachers are uneasy about the contradiction between the sharing of prerogatives that participation entails and the fact that they bear sole responsibility (not spread over all participants) (France);

– The preservation of their authority in situations which are beyond them (England). Some are said to have "a liking for lone authority" (France);

– The quality of education if people who are not teachers interfere in the running of the school's affairs (Italy).

1. **Apprendre à être**, Edgar Faure, Unesco-Fayard, 1972.

Change of role

A head teacher is a head imposed institutionally from above. This does not necessarily give him the qualities which will enable him to assume an operational role in increasing and developing the creativity of the school community and leading it towards the attainment of known objectives. This new image is gradually replacing the somewhat magus-like ascendance his status as head once gave him.

If his function is not mainly bureaucratic[1] the requirements change radically. What matters most is inner integrity. The centre of gravity of his function tends to shift from the head to the heart of the school. This is easier said than done. Backed up only by his wavering self-confidence, the head often feels abandoned and even more isolated than the other teachers, with a sense of guilt because the facts do not square at all with his underlying image of himself and his role. This is a problem with which nearly all those in authority are now familiar.

D. *Parents*

Parents seem to provoke more resistance than they actually put up. Often they are still viewed as outsiders making their first entrance into the private world of the school. And it takes time for the newcomers to cease to be intruders.

Lack of information

The resistance they encounter is often due to their ignorance – that is, their lack of information about educational developments and school organisation. Some countries report that many parents do not consider themselves competent to play any useful part.

This incompetence is obviously not innate. It can be overcome if the parents make an effort to put themselves in the picture. This takes time, and often neither the parents nor other parties have enough motivation to devote the necessary time to exchanging information.

Thus their own indirect resistance often takes the form of lack of interest and absenteeism.

Representatives – The base

As they have little or no contact with other parents, parents' representatives run a constant risk of speaking only for themselves. As

1. That is, if the best kind of head teacher is not one whose knowledge and ability enable him to make the best application of standards set by others and of impersonal regulations, without any "arbitrary" personal element.

a result, of course, the views they uphold are treated with far less respect. This may be one of the reasons for the position in which they find themselves in many general co-operation bodies: they feel tolerated rather than welcomed by the teachers and their own children.

It is more at national level, as an organised body representing a large number of persons involved in school life, that parents' groups prove most active and effective. Within schools, most parents prefer individual contact with their own children's teachers. This generally means that personal concerns are given absolute priority over co-operation with the school community as a whole. Civic sense begins in the family, and often remains there.

E. *Participants in general*

Basic assumptions

In general, when any of the participants prevent the participation machinery from working, it is because of certain assumptions, the most frequent of which are:

– Everything has been decided in advance;

– Only minor unimportant points are discussed: the participants are being manipulated and treated as children;

– It is illogical to study one aspect of the system without questioning the whole;

– All problems are ultimately financial. Without any power of decision in financial matters the rest is pointless;

– Some people use information as a weapon against the participants and keep it out of their reach.

On the whole, *teachers* show some interest, *parents* less, while *pupils* cannot make up their minds. The pupils see in participation a possible means of action, but in some countries – especially those where pupils are heavily involved in politics – they consider that no fundamental changes can be made within the system, everything being so quickly digested, assimilated and "retrieved".

Unpreparedness

All the countries which admit to difficulties in making participation work put this down to a "technical" shortcoming: the unpreparedness of all parties for this kind of active co-existence. As education quite naturally applies its own values, assumptions and

methods, it advocates "preparation", "training" and "practical courses". But the content and purpose of this training are nowhere formulated in practical terms. Two considerations are clearly paramount: a desire that participants should co-operate better than they do at present, and a faith in unspecified techniques which are expected to change the behaviour of participants. One senses the existence of great reserves of power and resources, but equally great difficulties in understanding and co-operation.

When it comes to training pupils for participation, ideas are more precise. Such training is best given in the form of daily practice of participation methods in class.

There is a general conviction that individual systems of values – especially values applicable to group life – depend on a number of practices. If daily life does not establish values, at least it affects their adoption and development. The documents therefore say that it is through classroom activities and relationships that a co-operative spirit is created and a desire for teamwork fostered [1]

II. **Obstacles (conditions, circumstances)**

A. *National differences*

The conditions and circumstances described below are always determined by the country, and within each country to a large extent by the locality.

Regulations, approaches and attitudes vary in accordance with history, tradition, sociological factors, administrative structures, decision-making machinery – whether centralised, decentralised or dispersed – and the political context and, as regards educational institutions in particular, in accordance with the school's image in society, the public concept of its role and that of authority, the existence or absence within the school of structures institutionalising participation; and lastly, in accordance with the real, potential or imaginary means of pressure possessed by the groups which go to make up the educational community in a limited or wider sense: pupils, teachers, parents and other persons involved with the life of the school. [2]

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1. It is therefore important that the adults directly involved in this training process should themselves give the example of such a spirit and desire. For this it is necessary that they should have wished and been able to change their own attitudes, ideas, models and underlying psychology which have been built up over a lifetime. This is neither easy, nor usual.

2. Brussels Symposium, 18-24 November 1973, report.

In other words, although in all countries education is centralised to a greater or lesser degree, the way the system works – and therefore the area of freedom possessed by schools – within the national framework varies from one country to another.

In view of these differences, the same area of freedom may be regarded as satisfactory in one place and very unsatisfactory in another. A merely descriptive study of the area of freedom would give no idea of how those who live within that area feel about it.

Some difficulties, moreover, are encountered by *all* parties, whereas others are felt more strongly by one group only.

B. *Regulations*

In very general terms, the main difficulty is said to be that some regulations imposed from outside the school by the central authority are too rigidly binding. The obligations they entail bear heavily on people who are not used to participation procedures or to the kind of relationships they involve. A selective authoritarian tradition exists which is illustrated and upheld by certain legislative texts and certain persons. The idea of mass education has been superimposed on structures designed for selection system and aiming at conformity with set patterns.

C. *The time factor*

The question of lack of time recurs continually. The parties are often unable to meet because they are bound by different working hours. In some schools the timetable is so full that it is impossible to find space for regular participation meetings. Even when this can be arranged, the time taken up by preparing for and holding meetings constitutes extra work. Teachers are sensitive to this aspect of the matter. A more general difficulty, just mentioned, is that the meetings are sometimes fixed for a time of day when not all representatives of the groups concerned can attend.

D. *Differences of language*

A large number of documents remark that teachers sometimes speak a very different language from pupils and parents. This is particularly the case in countries where most of the adult population have had only a primary school education. Sometimes the parents even get the impression that they are not wanted, not welcomed or not qualified.

E. *Infrastructure*

The holding of meetings is sometimes actually impeded by the school's lack of suitable premises or funds. In fact nearly all schools lack space. Where delegates have no facilities for meeting the people who have elected them, this lack will undermine their representativeness.

F. *Large schools*

In large schools a number of people involved in participation makes it both more difficult and more worth while. Big units, or combinations, make for less personal and less warm relations, because the people concerned cannot have as many personal contacts as in a school with smaller numbers. Each person gains in potential independence, but there is less overall cohesion.

Some countries, mainly the Federal Republic of Germany and France, mention difficulties due to the influence of political groups external to the school. Demands then become systematic and the educational results are found to be slight.

It is impossible to judge the actual effects of the personal resistances and practical obstacles described above.

Where the former are concerned, it almost appears that at one level people want participation while at another, deeper level they reject it and ensure – often by refraining from certain actions – that it is not fully achieved. They often drive with the brakes on.

The obstacles due to conditions and circumstances can only be removed gradually. Buildings, equipment, timetables and habits take years to change.

CHAPTER VI

PROSPECTS

Increased participation

The various states report that participation is steadily increasing. The fields which it covers vary according to the degree of *success* (satisfaction) or *failure* (dissatisfaction) experienced by each country or according to national living standards and habits.

Options

A system of options is developing, in accordance with the general principle that everyone is entitled to take an active part in choosing his own education and its methods and content.

Methods

Educational methods which put group creativity before the absorption of knowledge are spreading sometimes from the primary to the secondary schools and sometimes in the opposite direction.[1] England and Scotland in particular urge more classroom participation. The changes in education are everywhere tending towards greater activation of pupils.

It is up to the teachers to adapt themselves to this fundamental change. "In addition to his traditional tasks the teacher must increasingly become a counsellor, a partner in discussion; someone who helps in looking at both sides of a question rather than a depository of ready-made truths. He will have to devote more time and energy to productive and creative activities: interaction, discussion, stimulation, understanding, encouragement. Without this change in the relations between teachers and taught there can be no real democratisation of education."[2]

1. This is probably more a question of practical opportunities than of educational principles.
2. **Apprendre à être**, Edgar Faure, Unesco-Fayard, 1972, p. 90.

Decentralisation

As participation is officially advocated by all member states, it is natural that a gradual decentralising movement should be taking place.

In the first place, it is generally accepted that participation can only develop to the satisfaction of the participants if they can be given more freedom of choice than is now normally the case.[1] Wider independence is what makes participation work.

Secondly, the very operation of participation groups creates a pressure towards decentralisation. The school concertation bodies do not always seem to be very aware of their possibilities of action vis-à-vis the central authority or to make full and satisfactory use of them. In the last resort, many restrictions imposed by the central authority continue to exist only because those concerned accept them fundamentally, despite superficial protests. These groups can often do more than they think they can: for one thing, they can regularly give reasoned advice to the higher powers. Means of communication between the schools and the central authority are not always used in both directions. This leads to misunderstandings and underlying bitterness and also to non-committal or obstructive attitudes.

Continued development

In May 1968 the demand for independence, if not independence itself, received a powerful impetus. The hurricane has since dropped to a breeze, but things are no longer quite the same.

The United Kingdom reports that more and more parents and pupils are entering school boards. Scotland says there is a strong tendency towards encouraging participation, though much remains to be done, and links the phenomenon to the reduction in the number of secondary schools, the remaining ones having become very large and difficult to govern without delegation of powers by the head teacher and consultation of the participants at all levels.[2] Cyprus speaks of pressure to make participation official. France focuses attention more on teacher-pupil relationships as forming the crux of

1. In 1968 a Danish commission, in the conclusions to its study on the grammar school of the future, described a type of organisation in which the forms, field of activity and powers of the various participation committees would be considerably enlarged.

2. The SIA Report (Sweden) advocates radical reform. This forward-looking report calls for a managing committee (no longer a head teacher alone) comprising representatives of groups concerned with the smooth running of the school, appointed for two years and possessing wide powers of decision spread over all the committee's members.

the matter. The pupil's status is changing there.[1] He is being given an increasing number of responsibilities, and this is already transforming relations between teachers and taught (a self-exciting circuit of cause and effect.).

The general school concertation bodies will probably come to include representatives (or more of them) from outside the school, such as delegates from the trade unions, economic and professional circles and local authorities.

The desires that make for participation are undeniably strong. They are born of a movement towards greater maturity and social independence. This is a basic drive whose very power may well achieve results otherwise unobtainable.

Beneath a sometimes awkward exterior, the desire for participation conceals the adult's serious intention to exercise his natural right to have a say, directly or indirectly, in choices which affect himself. This is the real meaning of co-operation, which as a counterweight to aggressive individualism has always enabled us to survive and overcome difficulties.

If we consider its natural roots we shall see that participation, despite the obstacles and resistance it sometimes causes, is a requirement of all education. We do not always know how to go forward, but we feel that we must . . .

The member states unanimously tend towards a single conclusion which confirms a statement already made elsewhere: "It can certainly be said that even if it may appear impossible and unrealistic in the present state of the world to transform structures and do away with traditional taboos, as required by such a reform, the trend in that direction will steadily gather momentum." [2]

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1. More and more French secondary school pupils are working part-time, not only during the holidays but throughout the school year. "Permanent education", moreover, brings adult students into the schools. The pupils group has consequently grown in social maturity: relationships can no longer be what they were. Thus the idea of supervision is giving way to that of information: the "invigilator" is sometimes replaced by a librarian at the request of the head teacher. In reality the problem is a far wider one. Never before — or at least never in such large numbers — have those for whom the authorities were accustomed to think and take decisions shown this profound desire to reduce or abolish the enormous inequality of role and status (France).

2. **Apprendre à être**, Edgar Faure, Unesco-Fayard, 1972, p. 91.

CHAPTER VII

RECOMMENDATIONS

Preliminary remark

To conclude this survey of the reports received from member states of the Council of Europe on various forms of participation in secondary education we propose four recommendations.

But firstly, as it were to add substance to these recommendations, we would draw attention to two basic problems that everywhere are either explicit or implicit: the problem of *communication* and that of *authority*.

Some forms of training can do much to remedy imperfections in self-expression and in listening to others, and thus cope with psychological and technical difficulties of communication.

The problem of authority is connected with individual degrees of emotional maturity within structures which are often authoritarian and always firmly entrenched, and involves a range of situations which are harder to clarify and deal with. Old attitudes based on the personal family pattern still secretly direct behaviour that is ill suited to situations which, except in often unconscious fantasy, no longer involve a parent-child relationship but a totally "non-family" relationship between adults working together on a joint educational project.

Recommendation No. 1

The limitations imposed by certain regulations of the central authority or by certain material conditions should be modified to facilitate the practice of participation.

This refers to cases of unnecessary rigidity which should be identified and then eliminated, in order to rationalise the work in an

educational community in which participation has been adopted as a life style. Certain matters should be examined more especially, modifications being made where necessary: timetables (a certain amount of time being allocated annually for each subject), class-room methods and budget allocations.

It is said that, in these matters particularly, a "fairly large" degree of independence is essential for participation (increased powers of decision for the school and of co-decision for the representatives of the various groups in the general school concertation bodies). The very idea of initiative and creativity is inconceivable unless schools have some room for manœuvre between two kinds of stipulations: those relating to general aims [1] and those relating to methods of implementation which are the ones felt as restrictive or oppressive and which should be made more flexible.

"The pupils, whether juvenile or adult, should be able to take responsibility as the subjects not only of their own education but of the educational system as a whole ... Not only does the degree of participation in education increase with the age of the subject, but it also naturally varies according to the fields covered.". [2]

If greater independence is granted, it will involve, among other things:

– redefining administrative responsibilities in accordance with the new degree of independence;

– forming self-regulating teams for education and animation and laying down the minimum standards necessary to prevent education from slipping into a confusion of personal ventures not subject to any internal or external control.

Participation is helped or hindered in practice by certain material conditions (e.g. whether suitable premises are available or not). "In all new building or modernisation of secondary schools, the attempt should be made to provide accommodation and facilities which can to advantage be used not only by students and teachers but by non-teaching staff, parents and other sections of the public. We refer to recreational facilities (gymnasiums, swimming pools, games halls, club rooms etc.) and educational facilities (workshops, drama, studios etc.)." [3]

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1. Including minimum educational standards.
2. **Apprendre à être**, Edgar Faure, Unesco-Fayard, 1972.
3. Brussels Symposium, 16-24 November 1973.

"The architectural design of the premises must correspond to the trend in educational methods, the new organisation of pupils' groups and to the necessary facilities." [1]

Recommendation No. 2

Training must be organised that is specific to the needs of all the parties.

In many countries participation still engenders anxiety – with various effects on behaviour. Tradition has not necessarily prepared people to work in teams. All too often people's social personages eclipse the real persons. The aim of training in teamwork is to lessen the psychological importance of people's status, so that roles become less rigid and, although losing none of their specific attributes, tend to be played in conjunction with other roles rather than in isolation. [2]

Here, as in all fields, training should not be confined to the initial stages. From time to time further training should be given in conditions suited to the degree of experience gained.

Having made this general remark, let us note the most significant statements made about the various groups involved.

1. The teachers are generally regarded as playing the most important role. Without them there can be no participation; they are the keystones of the system. It is correspondingly necessary to train them. The various proposals can be summed up as follows:

a. Self-training in everyday school life by means of concerted work between teachers of a single subject and/or of different subjects, leading to the creation of educational teams, where possible interdisciplinary. The main aim should be participation through development of the ability to enter into relationships, communicate, work in groups (as organiser or otherwise) and administer (techniques).

The psychological, administrative and material difficulties which are always encountered by such teams of teachers should be seen in relation to the previous recommendation. [3]

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1. **La fonction enseignante dans le second degré**. – La documentation française, Paris, 1972.

2. Lecture by A. de Peretti on "Participation in teaching. Sociological, psychological and educational approaches", to the Brussels Symposium, 18-24 November 1973.

3. In order to deal with certain psychological difficulties, some countries have introduced "liaison teachers", one of whose duties is to promote good relations between the various groups involved in the school's life.

b. Self-training in the classroom through teaching methods involving the systematic use of participation in various forms. Teaching and participation are then closely linked, and should never be separated in the classroom.

"Training through the everyday classroom experience, using new methods (individual work, team-teaching, flexible division of classes according to levels, research etc.). Clearly, teachers and pupils alike would benefit, each teaching the other by a process of continual adjustment. The institution of teaching by levels is of capital importance." [1]

c. Training by means of specific situations, especially in residential courses introducing group dynamics: "Training in new methods, study of assessment procedures, school populations, school and vocational guidance channels, stimulation of interest in social and economic problems, and the systematic cultivation of communication faculties." [2]

Most teachers have received training of the critical faculty and training in expression. Such training is certainly excellent, but it only goes part of the way, for if the critical mind is left to flourish alone it tends to stifle all other turns of mind. As for expression, it too easily becomes all important at the expense of helpful listening. This often makes teachers more inclined to scrutinise the finish than to examine the vessel itself.

The head teacher in particular should be able to benefit from this type of training, since it is his task to encourage relationships that produce a climate of participation.

2. The pupils should start to be trained as soon as they go to school, mainly by teaching methods. In this respect we would refer to paragraph *b* above concerning teachers.

Furthermore, the various committees and boards dealing with routine school problems have a practical training value. Despite — indeed *because of* — the pupils' obvious lack of knowledge, ability and a general grasp of problems in concertation situations, it is important to draw them into the discussions as often and in as large numbers as possible. They are, moreover, the only people who know what it means to be a pupil today. It is therefore vital that they should be able to express their experience through democratic structures

1. Brussels Symposium, 18-24 November 1973.
2. Ibid.

and methods, about which a large number of them still know virtually nothing (Sweden).

Situations in which adolescents and adults meet to perform a common task may in theory help to overcome the feeling among the young of "a failure to communicate with the older generations and of being surrounded by a hostile society".[1] Such situations may also cause adults to react less defensively to young people.

3. It would be useful if parents' associations were to hold training sessions in teamwork for their members. In addition to this, schools should be able to set aside four, five or six half-days a year out of their "time budgets" for contact with parents' groups. The subjects to be discussed should of course be decided with those concerned, but obviously the information aspect should be given priority at first. Most parents are almost completely ignorant about the school as it is (and about how it is developing), i.e. about the general aims of education, the specific aims of the subjects taught and the techniques and means used to achieve those aims, to say nothing of the assessment criteria.

Recommendation No. 3

Suitable steps should be taken to supply and circulate information in order to reach all the persons concerned.

Two kinds of information may be mentioned.

— The first is *basic general information* about current educational problems and the situation of a particular school in the educational system of the country concerned. These data will form the background to specific problems. It is important that all members should have an adequate knowledge of the school regulations and the areas of freedom of:

a. the general school concertation body in relation to the central authorities, and *b.* each group within that body. Without this basic information the protagonists are condemned to work in vague and unsatisfactory conditions and without seeing their efforts bear fruit. This first type of information concerns parents and pupils more particularly.

— The second type consists of *specific data about matters to be dealt with* at the next meeting. It is desirable, and sometimes indispensable, that this information should be supplied to the protagonists

1. "Teenage Morals", **Times Educational Supplement**, 16 September 1966, p. 550.

before the meeting, which will otherwise be no more than an information meeting. A system for meetings should be worked out in each school.

Communications should be made physically easy, or effective co-operation will become difficult. Arrangements must be made for easy and regular personal contact. This applies particularly to large schools, where communications (psychological as well as physical) make participation more difficult.

Recommendation No. 4

Delegates must be truly representative and so in frequent contact with the people they represent.

Representation and representativeness raise problems everywhere. Are the delegates really representative? This is often doubted. And even if they are at the time of their election, do they remain so? On what conditions can they remain so?

a. The first difficulties occur even before the group representatives are elected: sometimes the social status of the candidates is different from that of the great majority of the people they are to represent. This majority is therefore not "represented".

b. A second series of difficulties relates to contact between electors and elected.

A few general remarks may be made about each kind of difficulty.

a. It would be desirable for the candidates as a whole to reflect the entire school population socially, economically and culturally, or at least in the various scholastic categories of pupils.

This recommendation, which relates mainly to the pupils' and parents' groups, is of course put forward here simply as the expression of what is desirable. It is not in any way intended to stipulate "categories" of candidates within each group or their numerical weighting. It merely draws attention to the possibility of disparate interests, values and preoccupations as between the representatives and the people they represent.

b. It is important that electors and elected should keep in constant touch, otherwise the latter will become isolated from the former to the detriment of participation.

If there is no contact between the electorate and its representatives, and if the latter are not given regular instructions by the former, there is no representation. The electorate will soon become dissatisfied and apathetic.

It is therefore recommended that informal or self-organised groups (the substructure) should guide and support the elected group or groups (the superstructure). In this connection it is stated that contact within the pupils' group is even more necessary than in the other groups. For quite apart from the educational value of the discussions, adolescents usually change their minds more often than adults, for better or worse, because they are growing up rapidly. Naturally, therefore, the pupils' representatives in particular need to remain attentive to their electors and informed of their variations. To be practicable, this recommendation requires some adjustment of time-tables and premises (see Recommendation 1). Participation cannot take place, or even less produce positive results, in a system that is kept wholly unchanged in its structural, administrative and physical features.

CHAPTER VIII

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS [1]

I. Principles

We would draw attention to two basic principles that are widely proclaimed:

– the need and desire to centre the school on its pupils and stimulate it as an educational community, with a view to training in democracy;

– equality of opportunity through compensation for handicaps, especially social and cultural ones.

The differences in the views expressed relate less to the principles themselves than to the means of implementing them.

II. Findings

1. Most of the countries are in the process of conducting research into participation, as regards both teaching methods and organs of concertation. Criteria of success or failure are hard to define, for any failure or loss in the task may be accompanied by success or gain in the matter of the relationship and training for change. Some countries point to the danger of lowering the standard of knowledge and thus simultaneously reviving a "super-élitist" system. The middle way between too much and too little participation is felt to be a narrow one, but none other appears to exist. *Participation is felt to be full of promise, but still little known.*

2. Participation sometimes reveals conflicts which a system without participation would have concealed. We have invariably sought to deny, stifle and dispose of conflict, which is yet an integral part of life. In promoting social and emotional maturity, participation

1. These are based largely on the reports drawn up at the end of the Brussels Symposium, to which we have frequently referred in the course of this study.

may perhaps enable conflict to be dealt with in a rational and straightforward way as a natural aspect of human problems which is inevitable and to be expected. Fundamentally the handling of conflict is no less important than the handling of information. *Participation tends to raise the struggle to the level of debate: it is thus a pre-eminently civilising work.*

3. All parties benefit from participation. In the first place, they gain the experience of being no longer isolated individuals but of working in a team with a share of responsibility in the organisation as a whole; secondly, each learns more about the role of the other parties and can appreciate it more fully; thirdly, the parties can also assess more realistically the relative strengths and weaknesses of the school community; and lastly, their personal interest or interest in their work increases, because the educational problems and the problems of school life have been discussed openly. *Participation promotes a community spirit.*

4. Regulations and techniques for participation are not enough. Also necessary are co-operative and above all understanding attitudes (rather than mere *tolérance*) towards differences in other people and thus towards all the variations of age, sex, status, education, ideology, opinion etc. *Participation demands and develops co-operative attitudes.*

5. Lastly, there is the sociological consideration of the danger of creating, or allowing to come into being, a group which is debarred from making any decisions. "Young people, faced as they are with a prolonged adolescence and deprived of the right to take part in decision-making at a national level, will become more and more impatient ... ending up as a threat to the whole of society."[1] *Participation makes for peace.*

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1. Alvin Toffler, **Future Shock**, 1971, quoted by A. de Peretti, Brussels Symposium, 1973.

Appendices

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE AND REPLIES BY MEMBER STATES

A. Questionnaire

1. Please give the aims of participation in your country.

2. In which fields does participation exist and, more especially, what kind of participation is there:

a. in the running of the schools?

b. in everyday life within the classroom?

c. in the choice of curricula?

3. In these participation situations,

a. how is the power of decision-making shared, and is there any kind of restriction on it?

b. who is involved in the various participation situations? Is there a system of delegation of authority for certain circumstances? If so, how does it work?

4. What kind of obstacles have you encountered? (People, rules, sociological context, psychological attitudes, etc. . .)

5. In your opinion, at which school level (pre-school, primary, lower secondary, upper secondary) does participation become really beneficial:

a. in structured forms?

b. in teaching methods?

6. Have you any pilot schemes for participation? If so, please say how they work and describe the conditions which are indispensable to their running.

B. Replies by member states to the questionnaire

We give below the replies to the questionnaire, in unequally abbreviated form.

They are abbreviated because we were limited in the length of our text. We were therefore obliged to force them into a Procrustean bed and where necessary change the order of the paragraphs to correspond to the order of the questions. We hope the authors of the original texts will understand our reasons and excuse us.

The answers have been unequally abbreviated because some replies ran to several dozen pages and others to only two or three. We therefore tried to take into account the length of each country's text and its correspondence in form to the questionnaire.[1]

The wording is that of the originals. We did not modify it for the sake of a more harmonious continuous text, feeling that we had no right to present a new, inevitably personal version, the original versions being official ones approved by the various countries. We hope the authors will forgive us for interrupting the flow and logic of their documents for these two practical reasons.

1. Some countries sent documentation which has no direct connection with the questionnaire. We have incorporated the main usable points in our report.

AUSTRIA

1. In its section 2, the School Education Act *(Schulunterrichtsgesetz)*, in force since 1 September 1974, fundamentally states:

"For the purpose of fulfilling the task of the Austrian school according to section 2 of the School Organization Act *(Schulorganisationsgesetz)* the present federal act shall regulate the internal organisation of the school as constituting the basis for the co-operation of teachers, pupils and parents in a school community."

Thus, the purpose of participation in education and education for participation is the fulfilment of the task of the Austrian school.

2. The principal instrument of co-operation and participation of teachers, pupils and parents is the school community committee (Schulgemeinschaftsausschuß).

(7) The tasks of the school community committee shall include:

a. discussions concerning particularly:

aa. important questions of instruction,

bb. important questions of education,

cc. questions in connection with the planning of school events (in particular of hiking days, country hostel weeks, and school skiing courses),

dd. the carrying out of parents' consultation days,

ee. the organisation of collections,

ff. the carrying out of events in connection with school career counselling,

gg. constructional measures within the premises of the school,

hh. questions of school hygiene and health in school,

ii. projects serving an active participation in school life (section 58, paragraph 3);

b. definition of the scope of the pupils' participation and co-determination rights (section 58, paragraph 2) and definition of the scope of functions of the pupils' representatives (section 59, paragraph 5);

c. the deprivation of eligibility of a pupil to the office of pupils' representative (section 59, paragraph 6).

(11) Each member of the groups represented in the school community committee (teachers, pupils, parents) shall have one deciding vote; the headmaster in all cases of paragraph 7, the parents in all cases of paragraph 7, letter *a*, subletter *ii*, letter *b* and letter *c*,

shall have an advisory capacity only. Abstention from voting shall not be permitted. Proxy voting shall not be allowed and shall be considered ineffective.

(14) The headmaster shall have the duty of suspending a decision by the school community committee on matters covered by paragraph 7, letter *a*, subletter *ii*, letter *b* and letter *c*, if he considers it contrary to law, and of obtaining the instructions of the school authority of the first instance.

In the above-mentioned act the rights of the pupils are summarised in particular in section 58 and section 59:

"Section 58

(1) The pupils of a school shall have the right of participation in that they shall have the right of safeguarding their interests and of taking part in the organisation of school life. In this activity the pupils shall have to be guided by the task of the Austrian school (section 2 of the School Organisation Act).

(2) Within the scope of safeguarding their interests vis-à-vis the teachers, the headmaster, and the school authorities, the pupils shall have the following rights:

a. rights of co-operation:

– the right to a hearing,

– the right to information,

– the right to submit suggestions and express opinions,

– the right to participate in individual items of teacher conferences, with the exception of discussions concerning performance rating according to section 20, paragraphs 6 and 7, and the matters covered by section 22, paragraph 2, letter *f*,

– the right of co-determination in the organisation of instruction within the framework of the curriculum,

– the right of participating in the selection of the media of instruction;

b. rights of participating in decisions:

– the right to participate in decisions concerning the setting up of the house rules,

– the right of participating in decisions concerning the application of educational means according to section 47, paragraph 2,

– the right to participate in decisions concerning applications for the expulsion of pupils.

The definition of the scope of the pupils' rights of co-operation and rights of participating in decisions shall be the task of the school community committee (section 64)."

The activities of the parents' councils are regulated by section 63 of the School Education Act:

"Section 63

(1) The headmasters shall have to promote the setting up and the activities of parents' councils which, on the basis of their statutes, shall be open to all parents or guardians of pupils of the respective school.

(2) The organs of the parents' council may submit suggestions, requests and complaints to the headmaster and the head teacher of the class; the headmaster shall have to examine the issues raised by the parents' council and to discuss them with the organs of the parents' council.

(3) The parents' council shall be given an opportunity of expressing their opinion on an application by the school conference (department conference) to make use of . . ."

3. Naturally, participation means a limitation of the sole jurisdiction of the headmaster vis-à-vis the teachers and the pupils, of the teachers vis-à-vis the pupils, without the headmaster or the teachers being freed of their basic responsibility.

. . . certain impeding elements are to be felt:

– some headmasters are afraid of not being sufficiently equal to certain developments;

– some teachers have the (unjustified) feeling that the legal position of the pupils is more firmly established than their own;

– some pupils have come to the sobering recognition that participation is not the same as sole determination.

5. According to the provisions of the School Education Act, pupils' representatives and school community committees exist at the polytechnic courses, at the vocational schools, and at the intermediate and secondary schools, i.e. beginning with the ninth grade . . . even before the ninth grade.

. . . it was found that a necessary pre-requisite for success is a basic readiness, particularly on the part of the teachers and the pupils, to accept each other as partners.

CYPRUS

1. *Aims of participation.* The aims of participation in education in Cyprus are: to secure the widest possible foundation in education, to utilise all the existing resources in education and especially to achieve democratisation in education and the training of responsible citizens.

2. *Fields in which the participation is practised.* The participation in education in Cyprus is informal and is not provided by the existing legislation. Nevertheless it is essential and its effect in education is widely felt in all levels of policy making, the administration of the schools and the life of the classroom.

a. In the administration of schools the federation of parents and the councils of parents of the individual schools – which are freely elected and therefore representative bodies – are influential as consultative bodies and pressure groups.

b. In the class life "the communities of pupils" are sometimes well organised bodies which have established a dialogue with the headmaster and their teachers in matters of homework, class regulations, discipline and others.

c. In the prescription of curricula the influence of parents and pupils is very weak. The parents facilitate the utilisation of the community knowledge resources and in some instances in primary schools they offer voluntary work in teaching and helping pupils in their individual study. In the prescription of curricula the teachers associations are more influential.

3. Officially the decision lies always with the educational authorities. But normally they do not decide without consulting the representative bodies, especially the teachers' associations and the federation of parents. They consult them on matters ranging from the hours of schooling and the duration of the school year to school regulations, the evalution of teachers and their promotion opportunities.

4. Since there is no legislative provision for official participation we cannot speak of reaction to it. At the moment there is pressure for this participation to take an official form.

5. From the pre-school level.

6. No.

SPAIN

1. Participation seeks to involve society in general and the teaching profession in particular in the work of education, with the sole purpose of making this work more realistic and ensuring the co-operation of the parties most directly concerned. As a teaching method it seeks to prepare pupils for the conscientious performance of their duties and exercise of their rights as citizens. Under the present Education Act the ministry is required to "stimulate, guide and co-ordinate social co-operation ..." (Article 135. *e)* and students have the right and duty to "co-operate actively in the work of education in accordance with the form suitable to, and limits imposed by, the age-group at each educational level" (Article 125 (3)).

With regard to methods, the Education Act and supplementary provisions mention the following among others:

At central level

(Several large) associations and numerous unofficial assemblies of teachers fulfil functions at the ministry and help to draw up curricula, syllabuses and statutory standards for the various educational levels. The ministry, however, has the final say.

At regional and provincial level

Representatives of various bodies and provincial institutions take part and inform the ministry of the province's educational wishes.

At school level

- teachers' council,
- school consultative assembly,
- associations of parents and friends of the school,
- students' circle (in secondary schools).

Thanks to these various bodies there is extensive participation in the drawing up of curricula and syllabuses but little participation in everyday classroom decisions and in the running of schools, though here an exception must be made for private schools and schools directed by parents' co-operatives, which make up over 30 % of primary schools and over 60 % of secondary schools.

3 and 4. Teachers, parents and pupils are most directly involved in such participation.

Teachers

The Education Act (56.1) grants schools a large measure of freedom to adapt syllabuses to local conditions and with regard to

optional subjects and activities, assessment, methods and systems of administration and management etc.

In view of tradition and the difficulty of adapting to this new way of thinking, however, teachers tend to ignore problems unrelated to their own classes, and so far the schools have made little use of the freedom granted them.

Parents

Parents' associations already have a great tradition behind them and have made remarkable strides. They form part of the school's consultative assembly. Generally, however, their participation is very limited.

The difficulties of more effective participation are that such associations lack information about the new subjects and techniques which are gradually being adopted in schools; they feel they have no say when it comes to taking decisions; they are not accustomed to participation; and many headmasters and teachers regard their attempts to intervene in technical educational problems as an intrusion.

Pupils

Part IV of the act (status of students) recognises that pupils have the right and duty to "co-operate actively in the work of education in accordance with the form suitable to, and the limits imposed by, the age-group at each educational level", to "take part in guiding and organising schools", to "make reasonable complaints ... in the event of neglect or incorrect performance of educational duties", to "express in writing at the end of their secondary education or at the end of each stage of vocational training... their personal judgement of the educational activities of the school concerned and of the teaching staff..." and to "have representatives from students' circles and students' associations on the schools' governing bodies...".

The means exist, but in fact pupils participate very little or virtually not at all. This is because they and teachers are ill-prepared for it and because of the particularly authoritarian methods which prevail in many schools.

At the lower levels, participation appears to have been introduced in the context of civic and social education, mainly by means of specific methods (teamwork, group dynamics, individualisation, personal work, self-assessment etc.) and of co-operation in out-of-school and outdoor activities.

FINLAND

1. *Aims of participation*

The aims of participation have been defined in detail in connection with the reform implying the establishment of secondary school councils. The internal activities of vocational and comprehensive schools have either been already reorganised or the reform is planned to be implemented in accordance with the aims set for the secondary school council reform.

A committee, which prepared the school council reform under the chairmanship of the Director General of the National Board of Schools, stated in its report (1974) that it is necessary to increase the participation opportunities of the persons who work in the school in order better to attain the aims set for the school. Three main requirements were therefore set on the organisation of the school's internal activities:

1. Each member of the school community should recognise the aims set for school education;

2. The main emphasis in the planning should be set at the school level;

3. Each person working in a school should have the opportunity of participating in the planning of the school work on an equal basis and in accordance with his personal qualifications.

In the statement of the reasons for the act, school democracy was defined as a new kind of organisation for the school's internal work which aims at promoting the educational tasks of the school. The major starting point is to reform school and its working methods so that they meet the requirements set by the development of society, and to train and educate the members of a school community so that they are able to participate in the activities of society.

The effects of the reform were expected to be of two types: on one hand, the aim was to increase the efficacy of school work and to improve its results, and on the other hand, efforts were made to utilise the creative potentiality of the school in the general development of the school.

... the school council's important task is even in the comprehensive school to increase the efficacy of the planning of the school activities.

According to the working group, priority should be accorded to pedagogic objectives, and as regards decision-making, the objective is to increase the influence of those whom the decisions will affect.

2. *Fields where participation exists*

The school council is assigned to develop and integrate educational planning in the school, to maintain and to promote co-operation in the school, between the homes and the school and between the school and society, to organise class, subject and similar meetings; to assist school authorities in the supervision and development of the school; to enact the rules and regulations of the school; to develop social activities at the school; to define the disciplinary punishments except suspending or expelling; to submit reports and proposals on matters relating to the school and the school activities on request; and to carry out the other tasks assigned to it by the supplementary decree.

The most important planning unit subordinate to the school council is the class. The planning unit for internal planning at the class is the class meeting. Each pupil and class teacher at the class concerned is a member of the class meeting. The most important task of the class meeting is to plan its own activities, i.e. . .

At class meetings the teacher and the pupils are equal as to their rights and duties. The class meeting can either be a part of a regular school hour, or it can be held during the class supervisor's hours, which fits the purpose particularly well, or entirely outside the school hours.

Of other similar meetings may be mentioned the school meeting, where the members of the school community, viz. all pupils, teachers and the other staff of the school convene to discuss for instance questions of principle, plans or important decisions related to the school, and to submit recommendations or opinions on these to the school council.

3. *Decision-making in the different fields of participation*

a. The school principal is responsible for the running and everyday administrative duties of the school. Co-operation exists in the framework of the tasks which are assigned to the school council. The principal's task is to inform the school council on all matters related to the activities of the school.

The council also has an opportunity of controlling the principal's activities and, if deemed necessary, the council may interfere. At the private secondary schools, part of the running of the school belongs to the school board, which is a body appointed by the school proprietor. The school principal is always a member of the school board.

4. *Obstacles to the reform*

The obstacles can be grouped as *a.* problems caused by attitudes, and *b.* problems caused by the school's traditional activities and the existing rules.

Attitudes are not generally directed against the entire reform but there has been disagreement on its contents and various partial solutions. The critics of the reform are generally teachers and their organisations, and the political right.

5. *Participation at different school levels*

Pupils' participation – in one form or another – in the planning of their own activity and in decision-making concerning them is important at all educational levels. Structured forms of participation and activating teaching methods cannot be separated entirely from each other because it is the use of teaching discussions, group work and the like methods that activate pupils to independent work that is an important prerequisite for pupils' activity in the various planning and decision-making bodies. Teaching methods should therefore provide pupils with readiness to be active also outside the teaching situations.

Pupils' opportunities to influence should increase together with their growing maturity to master things as their age increases.

FRANCE

I. Aims of participation

Seeing that it has a major responsibility in education, the school must concern itself with preparing young people for life in society by bringing them to take an increasing part in community life, firstly that of the school and then the life of the local and national community, showing them that in all fields of educational life suggestions, ideas and constructive solutions may be freely and confidently advanced with due regard for others and respect for the rules of the game.

Mr Edgar Faure, in addition to the numerous circulars he has issued, which we shall be studying below, has frequently spoken out for participation. We need only quote the few words with which he prefaced a leaflet for class delegates in February 1969: "a school class is a community. It is through its delegates that it becomes aware of this fact and takes responsibility for its future. Thanks to them, and with them, all the class gains experience in democracy, and this transformation in the lives of your schools is a preparation for the transformation that is essential in the life of a rapidly changing human community."

The educational community "must forge close links between teachers, pupils, parents and administrators. It will create habits of discussion and discipline in action. It will encourage pupils, particularly in the *lycées*, to take increasing responsibility of their own accord."

Participation is thus regarded as a paramount aim of our educational system.

II. Fields and structures of participation

2.1.1. *Participation bodies in the school*

2.1.1.1. *The administrative board and standing committee*

The membership of the administrative boards of secondary schools, as laid down in the decree of 8 November 1968 amended in 1969, makes them in fact institutional concertation bodies, since all parties concerned in the school's affairs are represented on them. They comprise:

– *ex officio* representatives of the school administration (one sixth),

– elected representatives of the teaching, administrative, supervisory and domestic staff (two sixths),

– elected representatives of parents,

– representatives of local authorities and outstanding persons interested in the school's affairs.

The administrative board draws up the school's internal regulations. It submits a draft budget to the regional director of education, who has sole power of decision in the matter. In this field the board's powers are limited, for its resources (school fees and fixed grants) are determined in advance and most expenses are unavoidable: heating, lighting, food and maintenance.

The board may advise on all problems concerning the educational organisation and the school's affairs.

It meets in ordinary session at least once a term.

2.1.1.2. *Other boards*

– *The educational boards*

In addition to the administrative boards, whose powers cover all aspects of the school's affairs, there are the more specifically educational boards.

These constitute a form of participation which is particularly important in making education more effective by settling material problems, supplying as many educational aids as possible and reconciling the views of different teachers of a single subject.

– *Educational research and promotion groups*

These groups comprise representatives of the administration, teachers, parents and pupils and have the function of organising educational thinking, of promoting, co-ordinating and synthesising educational work, and of making proposals to the standing committees.

2.1.1.3. *"Corresponding teachers"*

The "corresponding teacher" is the latest institution for concertation. He is chosen from a school (a *collège d'enseignement technique* or *lycée)* which receives pupils from the *collège d'enseignement secondaire,* and his task is to establish the necessary links between the schools the children have been attending and those they may go on to. The "corresponding teachers" have special contacts with fifth-year secondary teachers and must give pupils in that year and their parents all necessary information about the organisation of the children's future studies.

2.1.1.4. *Socio-educational associations*

A circular of December 1968 recommended schools to set up, under the responsibility of their administrative boards, socio-educational associations run mainly by the pupils. These associations, which are often called *foyers* ("centres"), are a type of club which organises lectures and all kinds of out-of-school activities of a cultural, social or merely recreational character.

2.1.2. *Divisional participation structures*

2.1.2.1. *The principal teacher*

The principal teacher is the co-ordinator of the team of teachers. It is he who stimulates education in the classroom.

He is thus the link between the division's teachers, between pupils and teachers in the division, between parents and teachers, between the division and the school as a whole and its administration, and in the third and fifth years of the *collège d'enseignement secondaire* between the division and the "corresponding teachers" of the receiving schools. It is mainly with him that the class delegates deal.

2.1.2.2. *The class councils*

The class councils are the basic cells in which the participation of everyone in the life of the division is organised, under the stimulus of the principal teacher.

Each division has a class council, an elementary cell whose function is both educational and social. The division, which has a life of its own, has a network of relations with the school and the outside world. Throughout the year the council tries to assist each pupil's and the division's adaptation to curricula and to the school's life.

The class councils comprise, in addition to the division's whole team of teachers, representatives of the administration and the supervisory staff, two delegates of the parents, two delegates of the pupils, the vocational counsellors, the welfare officer and the doctor.

One circular has stated that the administrative board of each school is empowered to lay down the conditions of participation by the delegates of the pupils and parents.

2.1.2.3. *The pupils' representatives*

Since 1968 class delegates have replaced the old system of class prefects, who too often became agents for the administration who had to do all the thankless tasks (distributing information, keeping collections of texts, collecting mark books etc.).

The delegates are the spokesmen for their division with the administration and the teachers. They act as intermediaries between the administration and the pupils who have elected them.

2.1.3. *Participation in the educational life and fixing of curricula*

As a rule it is at this level that there is least institutionalised participation. Neither pupils nor parents nor teachers choose the curricula, which are drawn up by the ministry for the whole country. In theory no teacher has absolute discretion as to his teaching methods and is responsible to his general inspector alone. This general principle is however being applied with increasing flexibility in practice, with various forms of concertation.

2.1.3.1. *Participation by pupils in class work – independent work*

For a specific part of the curriculum pupils have to work alone, though with the advice and assistance of their teacher. They draw up a research programme and carry it out, using the facilities of the school's documentation centre. This arrangement calls for constant co-operation between the teacher – or teachers, if the research is interdisciplinary – and those in charge of the documentation centre.

2.1.3.2. *The "educational 10 %"*

What has been termed the "educational 10 %" was introduced in October 1973 to counteract the imposed centralism of curricula and isolation of disciplines, to encourage initiative on the part of teachers, to make education more open and to give schools a degree of independence.

This measure is intended to make the organisation of education more flexible and should also help to develop community life in the schools by making possible more direct participation by the people involved in fixing and pursuing educational aims appropriate to the conditions of the school and its population. The amount of time thereby made available will constitute an overall contingent, which should be used primarily for activities emphasising teamwork among the teachers.

III. **Problems and prospects**

3.1. *Obstacles and resistance*

3.1.1. *In structures*

3.1.1.2. *Contradiction between participation and the organisation of the school system*

One of the difficulties of participation is that it seeks to introduce in schools a way of life which in many respects conflicts with the

school system as it has functioned over the last fifty years and still largely exists today, so that, naturally, it cannot be transformed overnight.

Participation presupposes independence. It would thus entail a collegiate sharing of responsibilities. But French legislation has for so many years placed so much stress on the idea of the head teacher's responsibility that it is impossible not to feel there is some contradiction between the sharing of prerogatives and the maintenance of undivided responsibility.

3.1.1.3. *Formalist aspect of institutionalised participation*

In the very way in which it has been institutionalised, participation suffers from the faults it seeks to remedy. It was introduced by means of circulars or institutions before any attempt was made to create the necessary conditions for it to be viable.

3.1.2. *In mentalities*

In one way or another all the parties involved in participation in schools – administrators, teachers, parents and pupils – are slaves to patterns of thought and behaviour which make participation difficult.

3.1.2.1. *Head teachers*

For the structural reasons we have indicated, and also because of their mentalities, head teachers are not always willing to make participation work.

3.1.2.2. *Teaching staff*

Teachers are very diffident about participating in general school administration. They have a strong tendency to confine themselves to their teaching work and to consider that school activities do not concern them. Often they are still less inclined to accept participation by pupils and parents.

3.1.2.3. *Parents*

It must be said that parents have not really found their feet in participation. Sometimes they are on the side of the staff; more often they unconditionally support their children. They tend to accept meekly what the leaders of their associations tell them. They find it difficult to talk to the teachers, being torn between recrimination and formal respect. They are often perplexed by educational changes which they do not understand. Thus parents who have strongly asserted their right to participation often feel ill at ease in it. At administrative board meetings, they are either very passive, or confine themselves to minor

demands, or, like the teachers in their trade union, make themselves spokesmen for their parties and thus treat the board as a political soap-box.

3.1.2.4. *Pupils*

Their attitude towards participation varies considerably with each individual pupil and also according to the teachers, the school and the town.

They are difficult to talk to and are inclined to line up by classes and follow the behaviour of their "peers", who have much more authority over them than have their fathers.

Their rejection of adults often aggravates their own sense of being rejected.

If adults were less divided about the aims to pursue and gave children and adolescents a more stable and coherent image of themselves, it would probably be easier to get pupils to participate.

Prospects for encouragement of participation:

– In the years to come head teachers will play a crucial role in the process that is now beginning of thoroughly democratising our schools.

– Informal participation must be encouraged, firstly in the classroom.

– Training in participation (especially in group work) is necessary.

– Powers must be defined beforehand.

– Schools must be granted more independence.

GREECE

Question 1

a. A greater knowledge on the part of the state of the views, aspirations and possibilities of teachers, parents, pupils, students, professional, scientific and cultural societies, the clergy and the press with regard to educational problems.

b. Consideration of valid opinions and arguments advanced by the various groups of participants mentioned above, so that they can be given due weight in the planning of the structure of education, its operation and implementation of the curricula.

c. Informing the participants in question of final decisions taken by the state to deal with educational problems; making them favourably disposed for prompt material and moral contribution to the success of the official education policy.

d. Appreciation by all participants of the basic principle that, despite the interdependance of education and social and economic development, education must always preserve its own character arising from its chief aim, which is to form the personality through the harmonious development of all its moral, intellectual and physical faculties.

Question 2

There is some participation in all the three fields mentioned (suggestions by representatives of society, pupils' associations etc.).

Question 3

a. With regard to participation in the administration and running of schools and distribution of the power of decision-making:

– The following participate in school administration:

a. the head teacher,

b. the teaching staff,

c. the inspectors of education, who have special powers of decision.

– The following participate in managing the funds and resources of schools: the school committee, comprising the head teacher and three to five parents appointed according to a procedure prescribed by law, who have full powers of decision.

– Parents' and guardians' associations may help with the financial needs of the school and their children.

– Benefactors give financial assistance to schools in their own region of birth.

b. With regard to participation in everyday classroom life:

– Pupils' associations organised by each class for one year and operating under the supervision of teachers have powers of decision in certain activities (discipline, library, fêtes, excursions, school magazines, canteens, museum, community work etc.).

c. With regard to participation in planning curricula:

– Committees and working parties of leading national figures in education, science and culture, appointed by the Ministry of Education, study general and special educational problems and present reports without power of decision.

Question 4

The difficulties in the adoption and efficient application of a full participation system in our country are as follows:

a. Occasional resistance on the part of the political power, which is reflected in legislation.

b. The exaggerated and self-interested claims, prejudices and sometimes specious arguments of adults', pupils' and students' organisations and trade unions, and their repercussions.

c. The lack of a permanent co-ordinating body, representing everyone who is interested in education and influences public opinion, to put forward valid arguments and co-operate.

Question 5

a. Participation by pupils in the intermediate and final classes of primary schools and by secondary school pupils, always under the direction of teachers, is regarded as beneficial to the organisation of school life (fêtes, excursions, running of libraries, publication of magazines etc.).

The introduction – within a framework of responsibilities fixed in advance – of a system of participation by teachers, representatives of the country's social and cultural life, pupils and students in higher education, is regarded as beneficial in determining educational structures.

b. In the acquisition of new knowledge independent activity (free work, free discussion, verification and investigation experiments conducted individually and by groups, lectures on books just read etc.) is useful to ensure maximum participation by pupils of primary and secondary schools.

In deciding teaching methods it is desirable to have the participation of: i. teachers' associations, ii. psychologists, educationists, psychiatrists and biologists, and iii. students in higher education.

IRELAND

1. *Parent participation*

...

ii. The management boards for national schools (accepted) and for post-primary schools (proposed for all and accepted in the case of many vocational schools): two parents on a board of six for each school.

iii. Parent/teacher, parent/school associations. Statistics are not available but the number is considerable and growing.

2. *Teacher participation*

i. The teacher associations are involved directly in curriculum changes, in the preparation of subject syllabuses, in public examinations and in the review of examination results.

ii. Teacher associations are deeply involved in the provision of in-service training courses in co-operation with the Department of Education.

iii. It is proposed to involve teachers in the various school management boards mentioned above.

3. *Pupil participation*

This is an increasing factor in all our schools.

...

ii. The same process of pupil involvement is being developed in post-primary schools, especially in regard to certain areas – environmental studies, civics, Irish studies and in a special project concerning a transition year, the whole purpose of which is to allow the maximum pupil participation in the variety of activities which constitute the curriculum for this year.

iii. As yet no significant developments have taken place in securing participation of pupils in the running of our schools or in the preparation of curricula and syllabuses.

Participation by parents in structured forms becomes really beneficial from the upper end of the primary school through the secondary school. At these levels structured forms become necessary to provide regular information on new curriculum approaches and career opportunities.

At the pre-school and junior primary levels, informal parent/teacher contact is easier and more effective.

In view of the importance of the early years in intellectual development, parent participation in teaching methods is most beneficial at the pre-school and junior primary levels.

ITALY

The main purpose of participation in the Italian school system is to transform the school into a democratic community, to intensify the school's educational role through the contributions of the surrounding society and so to work that it becomes a permanent trait of the individual's behaviour and a means of expressing his personality in society.

Participation is thus both a foundation and an instrument of democracy, which is itself a prerequisite for participation.

In the educational process, participation stimulates personal enterprise and initiative, develops a sense of responsibility and promotes familiarity with interdisciplinary methods.

In the process of preparation for society, participation strengthens confidence in the value of democratic methods for solving daily problems and provides a channel for natural aggressivity by giving the pupil a legitimate means of expression for his needs and demands.

Modern Italian education is based on co-operation between the various persons in the educational system, who help to provide a social service by using available resources and chosing methods and content but have no power of decision where the actual existence of this service or its aims are concerned. When we speak of the "running of the schools", then we must bear this restriction in mind.

Participation machinery is to be set up at the highest levels and in various spheres of competence through the school boards of the districts, the provinces and the state. These boards comprise representatives of all those in charge of education as well as representatives of parents, pupils, trade unions, self-employed workers, entrepreneurs, cultural organisations, societies and institutions, local provincial and regional authorities and the business and labour world. They are essentially advisory; they advise – and are requested to do so in some cases – on school organisation and use of the existing structures in their areas of competence.

a. *In the running of schools* participation works through the local boards (in the case of primary schools) or school boards (for secondary schools of all types and categories). These boards are chaired by the head teacher and comprise representatives of the teaching and non-teaching staff and an equal number of representatives of parents (in primary and lower secondary schools) or parents and pupils (in upper secondary schools).

b. *In everyday classroom activities* participation works through inter-class councils (in the primary schools) or class councils (in the secondary schools), which are chaired by the head teacher (or a teacher delegated by him) and comprise all teachers of the class and representatives of parents and pupils.

c. There is no participation in the decisions on *curricula*, which remains a matter for the Ministry of Education.

a. The power of decision-making is variously distributed, the responsibilities and limitations being laid down by law, as follows:

1. Bodies comprising the head teacher and other teachers alone have responsibility for examining essentially technical questions.

The local boards and school boards may exercise real powers of decision concerning the use of funds, the school's internal regulations, the purchase, replacement and upkeep of equipment (technical and scientific material, libraries and audio-visual aids), adjustment of the school calendar to local conditions and the organisation of all additional activities.

The main resistance to this system of participation comes from a number of pupils who are hostile to any form of representation – believing it cannot solve their problems – and favour a system of direct democracy in which, in their view, everyone will be able to voice his demands. Other forms of resistance come from the attitude of certain teachers conditioned by individualist habits of thought and work acquired in their training and from head teachers who fear that the actual education may be sacrificed or disrupted if persons from outside the educational system have a say in the running of school affairs.

Furthermore, it is probable that many parents elected to the joint bodies will not be constantly available because of their occupations, or will hesitate to give help because they feel incapable of making an effective contribution.

Lastly, the setting up of participation machinery is hampered by inadequate infrastructures (e.g. shortage of space for assemblies and meetings), restrictive regulations (bureaucratic complexity, insufficient funds etc., delay in the publication of regulations and lack of experience on the part of all concerned).

The inter-class councils and class councils have power to make proposals concerning the educational process and experimental projects.

Within the limits of the school structure in question, these bodies may take decisions primarily on administrative and organisational problems. The implementation of such decisions, the drawing up of budget estimates and final accounts and preparations for meetings are a matter for executive committees (this is stipulated by law).

The principle of participation is also based on the conviction that everyone – at a specific level – is capable of taking decisions, bearing responsibility and coping with difficulties.

Pupils may therefore "participate" at any level of the school system, provided the forms and methods of such participation are suited to the degree of intellectual, emotional, ethical and social maturity they have reached.

a. *With regard to structures*, pupils may begin to participate gradually as from the upper grade of primary schools (i.e. at the age of 8), through free activities or, better, research activities, study, work or play projects planned and executed by them in school.

b. *With regard to teaching methods*, one can gradually make pupils participate in drawing up curricula and organising school work, choosing textbooks and other teaching material, discussing what has been achieved and what remains to be done and assessing individual and group work.

Among experiments in training for participation which suggest an educational model different from present schools may be mentioned the "Scuola città Pestalozzi" in Florence, which was established at the end of 1944 on the initiative of E. Codignola, the "Nicola Pistelli" lower secondary school in the Corea district of Leghorn and the "Biennio unitario" experimental school at Aosta.

LUXEMBOURG

Questions 1 and 2

In the Luxembourg school system "participation" is more a question of consulting the people concerned than of decision-making, which lies ultimately with the political authorities and the schools department.

Consultation takes place at different levels and in different contexts.

1. *Nationally*

a. *The Higher Council for Education* has the tasks of studying general educational problems, advising on questions submitted to it by the Ministry of Education and presenting to the Minister on its own initiative any proposals, suggestions or information it sees fit. It includes representatives of teachers, parents and economic and social circles.

b. . . .

c. *The curriculum committees*, comprising teachers, are responsible for reviewing the curricula in the various subjects and keeping them up to date.

d. *Ad hoc committees and working parties* are appointed by the Ministers to study specific questions, and their reports may lead to important reforms.

e. When legislative changes are being prepared, the Ministry of Education holds regular and general consultations with groups particularly affected by the changes, such as teachers' unions.

2. *In the schools*

a. *Running of schools*

In each lycée there is an education board with nine members (the head teacher and elected representatives of the teachers, parents and pupils) which participates in reviews of the schools' regulations on internal order and discipline, acts as a disciplinary board, stimulates and organises cultural, social and sports activities, submits to the Minister an annual report on the situation in the school, advises on the school's budget proposals, on the creation or abolition of optional courses and extra tuition for late beginners or backward children and on the school's internal organisation.

b. *Classroom activities*

In each class the pupils elect two delegates who act as spokesmen for them in dealings with the form master. The class delegates also elect the pupils' representatives to the school's education board.

c. *Decisions on curricula*

Each school appoints two representatives to the national curriculum committees for the various branches of education.

Question 3

With rare exceptions the power of decision-making is not dispersed. In some cases consultation is compulsory under current regulations.

In a small country like Luxembourg political control, and hence participation by parents and pupils, is very marked in parliament.

Question 4

Teachers may be observed to put up some resistance to representation of parents on official bodies (the education board). The pupils deplore the fact that the advisory bodies set up, particularly the education boards, have no powers of decision, and they consider that there are not enough pupils' representatives (two out of nine seats). They also contest the method of indirect election mentioned under point 2. *b*.

Question 5

Consultation of the persons involved (teachers and parents) seems very valuable in all cases. However, participation by pupils in the advisory bodies does not seem justified below the upper secondary level.

As pupils do not participate in decision-making, it is not possible to give an opinion based on experience.

Question 6

There are no pilot schemes for participation in Luxembourg.

MALTA

1. The educational system of Malta is undergoing fundamental structural and qualitative changes as a result of new needs emerging from the independence of the island. The reform is bound to include means of participation by parents, students and other interested bodies in education, although no clear and definite aims have as yet been formulated.

... although there is no formal legislation (except in the case of the university) for student participation in education, education for participation programmes have already been started.

a. *Education for participation*

By this term we understand the educational programmes which enable students to participate more fully in the life of the community as a preparation for citizenship and adult life. In teaching methods, this participation is developed through project work and community centred "social studies" activities. These have a place at both primary and secondary levels. In trade schools, students are often taken out to work on actual sites both as part of their training in the trade and as a form of participation in the project. Other forms of "education for participation" programmes are:

i. the organisation of community work – e.g. students' charities campaign, helping poor people, organising fairs for charity,

ii. the national heritage – plant a tree campaign, Arbor Days, the cleaning and restoration of places of national/historical/archaeological interest,

iii. environmental studies.

Most of these activities, though catered for nationally, are run by individual schools with as much freedom and leeway as possible from central imposition.

2. *Participation in education*

a. *On a national level*

The "Advisory Council for Education", Article 4.4 of the 1974 Education Act states, "shall, in addition to the Ministry of Education and of other persons experienced in the theory and practice of education, include persons who, in the opinion of the Minister, represent the views of parents, teachers, trade unions, industrialists and the Catholic Church." The duty of the Council is "to contribute by their advice to the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of school-children".

b. *Participation by parents*

A number of government and private schools have parent-teacher associations. The scope of these associations varies from school to school. In the case of government schools, the terms of reference of these associations are drawn up by themselves and later submitted for approval by the education authorities. Parent-teacher associations have no legal status, although they are encouraged by the Education Department. They have no direct authority to interfere in the running of schools, everyday life within the classroom, or the choice of curricula. They do help in many other ways, however, and their advice is at all times taken into consideration.

c. *Participation by students*

A number of government and private secondary schools have "students' councils" which are run with the permission and collaboration of the heads of the schools concerned. The terms of reference of these councils are drawn up by the individual bodies. Like parent-teacher associations, however, they have no legal status. Student councils help in the running of schools, the everyday life within the classroom as well as students' welfare as far as their terms of reference allow them.

d. *Participation by teachers*

Teachers participate in educational decision making in four ways:

i. in certain schools (e.g. the upper secondary school), there exist formal teachers' councils, which like parent-teacher associations and students' councils are mainly advisory. They may be entrusted with aspects of school management but have little actual say in either the running of the school and the choice of curricula.

ii. staff meetings. These can affect the running of schools and everyday life in the classroom.

iii. teacher unions. Teacher trade unions can hold meetings in school; they are represented on educational boards and committees; they have the normal trade union rights and can affect the running of schools, everyday life within the classroom and the choice of curricula. Trade unions have a legal status.

iv. teacher associations (e.g. the science teachers' association, the history teachers' association) can exert influence in curriculum planning and development.

3. *Decision making*

All these councils and associations are mainly advisory and consultative.

Sociologically, it is only since the 1950s that such participation has been encouraged, and psychologically many parents still look at schooling as something they are not qualified to interfere with. There is no legislation to give these councils any legal basis or authority – though legislation may do more harm than good to the educational process if it does not reflect the aspirations and wishes of the people. It must also be remembered that over three quarters of the adult population have had no experience of education beyond the primary stage.

4. There does appear a certain amount of indifference to fuller and positive participation in education by parents and by students.

5. Participation by parents and teachers is beneficial at all levels. Students' participation in the everyday life of the classroom and choice of interesting topics for study can start from the primary level. Participation in the running of schools can start slowly from the primary level, extend at the secondary level and reach its fullest expression at upper secondary.

NORWAY

The reply to the questionnaire applies to the nine-year compulsory basic school (grades one to nine, age groups 7-16).

1. To give pupils, teachers, parents and other persons involved with the life of the school some influence on their own working situation, with a view to making them more interested in the school and more content.

To give the pupils the experience of working in a team, of being more than an isolated individual.

To do away with the authoritarian relationship between teacher and pupil.

To give the pupils training in democratic procedures and prepare them for the assumption of responsibilities, and thus provide an apprenticeship for democracy.

2. *a.* Not in the basic school.

b. Pupils participate to some extent in the choice of methods, themes and teaching aids.

c. Yes, to a certain degree.

3. *a.* In the basic school pupils' participation generally takes the form of discussion with the teacher with regard to what methods and materials should be used and what themes should be studied. Parents have been especially active with regard to leisure time activities in school.

b. There is a system of delegation of tasks to pupils' council, teachers' council, school council, council for other employees, parents' council and collaboration committee. The collaboration committee consists of representatives from all the above-mentioned councils and in addition the school principal and one representative elected by the local school board.

What can be said even now is that participation and how it works very much depend upon the personality of the school principal.

4. The chief obstacle as regards pupils' participation derives from the fact that there is no clear definition of areas of decision and responsibilities.

However, it goes for the other councils as well that they quite simply have not enough worthwhile and challenging things to do.

5. To become really beneficial participation must in our opinion be practised at all levels and both in structured forms and in teaching methods.

6. Not in the basic school.

We have two experimental schools for upper secondary general education, where, for example, participation in the running of the school is being tried out, and where the general meeting is the chief authority of the school.

The main purpose of school and college councils is to ensure that effective communications are fostered between local interest and the education committee. They have a valuable role to play in encouraging effective liaison between home and school, between the various levels of schooling and in increasing the level of parental interest.

It is desirable for membership of the councils to include parents, head teachers, teachers, representatives from nursery schools as well as from primary and secondary schools, and representatives from local industry and commerce, and it is strongly recommended that pupil participation should be encouraged. It is advised that councils be set up for the secondary schools in a city area and their feeder primary and nursery schools; in rural areas it may be appropriate to form councils for individual schools.

3. Within recent years there has been a significant trend in Scotland for central government to devolve more and more of its functions on other bodies. Statutory regulations have been reduced in number and simplified in content and detail. Since 1959, colleges of education for the training of teachers, although almost wholly financed by grants from central government, have been managed by governing bodies made up of a wide range of educational interests. In 1965 an examination board was established to conduct the Scottish Certificate of Education examinations, previously conducted by the Scottish Education Department. In 1966, the General Teaching Council for Scotland was set up under the Teaching Council (Scotland) Act 1965. Its membership includes elected teachers, and members appointed by education authorities, the universities, other institutions of higher education and the churches, together with nominees of the Secretary of State for Scotland. The council is responsible for the registration of teachers and for matters of professional discipline, and is the Secretary of State's principal advisory body on teacher training and supply.

4. One significant effect of these changes has been to involve practising teachers increasingly in decision-making in the administration and organisation of education in Scotland; in local authority administration; in the pre-service training and entry standards, and policy for in-service training of their own profession; and in the constant review of the syllabuses for the Scottish Certificate of Education examinations in which they also play a very large part in the work of setting and marking the papers.

5. Perhaps the most striking illustration of the growth of the concept of education as a partnership is seen in curriculum development. While

the Secretary of State never formally determined the content of the curriculum, he exercised great influence on it through his conduct of the examinations and through the visits of Her Majesty's Inspectors; and for the most part early memoranda of advice on the curriculum were written entirely by Her Majesty's Inspectors. From the middle 1950s, however, working parties and committees set up to consider subjects or aspects of the curriculum began to include practising teachers among their membership. In 1965 a Consultative Committee on the Curriculum was set up as a standing body to improve the arrangements for consultation between all those concerned with curricular development and to maintain a continuous review of the curriculum as a whole. The committee, which acts as the Secretary of State's main advisory body on the curriculum, is broadly based and includes a substantial teacher representation, as do the various working parties and committees set up on the CCC's recommendation. In addition to their participation in national policy defining bodies, teachers are increasingly concerned in curriculum development at local and regional level; many working parties and committees have in fact been set up by education authorities, and these are wholly or predominantly manned by teachers under the general supervision of members of the education authority administrative staff.

6. Secondary schools in Scotland have become fewer and bigger; and at the same time no longer consist solely of virtually autonomous subject departments. Organisation is more complex; there is a clear need for greater devolution by head teachers, for more precise allocation of responsibilities below head teacher level, for systematic consultation at all levels within and across subject departments, and between subject departments and, for instance, guidance staff. All this argued a much greater degree of participation by teachers than hitherto in discussion and the making of policy and decisions. In order to meet this need for a more sophisticated and participating management structure, school staffs now include assistant head teachers to whom the head teacher may delegate some of his administrative, organisational and curricular responsibilities. A growing number of schools are establishing boards of studies consisting of promoted members of staff who plan and keep under review the school's curriculum.

Parents or parent teacher associations are now relatively common, meeting regularly to discuss educational topics and to hold social functions. Personal interviews between parents and teachers to discuss the progress of individual pupils are established practice in a growing number of schools. The strongest links have tended to be at the pre-school and infant stages where the pleasant informal atmosphere and

environment of many of the schools encourages observation, discussion and the involvement of parents in the school community.

The reorganisation of secondary education on comprehensive lines resulted in education authorities creating larger schools. The resulting loss of intimate contact with parents in a period of curricular change can cause bewilderment to parents. These effects are being countered by the increased number of promoted teachers some of whom have duties which are aimed at maintaining contact with parents and explaining school policy to them. Since May 1975, when local government was reorganised, local authorities have a duty to set up schools councils upon which both parents and teachers should be represented and in some cases senior pupils as well as other members of the community. It remains to be seen how far such councils will provide opportunities for parents and members of the community to participate in the educational process. In the more particular and personal matter of consulting parents about the courses their children should follow, schools usually invite parents to indicate their wishes at annual meetings with the staff concerned. There is however still a very strong sense among Scottish teachers that education is a highly specialised professional business and the development of true consultation with non-professionals – even parents – will be slow.

8. Hitherto there has been little or no evidence that Scottish pupils felt themselves excluded from consultation or decision-making processes. In the context of the relatively small school which was the norm, though discipline was usually strict, day-to-day relationships between staff and pupils were informal and not unfriendly. Particularly within the last fifteen years or so, the schools have been at pains to provide a range of curricular options wide enough to satisfy all but the most extravagant and bizarre demands. Senior pupils, whether in schools providing three-year or four-year or six-year courses, had the opportunity to exercise responsibility as prefects.

Most schools have a wide and varied range of extra-curricular activities, clubs, associations and the like which are largely run by pupils. Many schools have introduced hobbies or leisure activities periods into their timetables; pupils are usually free to choose from a wide and varied range of activities and play some part in managing them. The raising of the school leaving age to sixteen nonetheless has had the effect of increasing articulate dissatisfaction among a minority of older pupils who claim they see no purpose in the education provided. Recent trends and changes, modest in scope as they are, owe little to pupil frustration (of which there is virtually no overt sign).

TURKEY

1. In Turkey, participation in the educational sense implies a means of developing the individual, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

Participation together with other people develops the ability of the individual to adjust to a democratic community.

Participation is a means of developing the individual capacity for critical thinking.

2. *a.* In the running of the schools?

In Turkey the educational system may be categorised as a centralised system where the contents and organisation of instruction in any single school are fairly equal to the instruction offered in all other schools. Decisions on the general overall aims of the national educational system, economic and organisational frames, general guidelines, main goals, subjects to be taught and the main contents of subjects are taken centrally by the Ministry of Education.

b. In everyday life within the classroom?

Generally decisions concerning the contents of syllabuses and teaching methods are taken by teachers. It is certainly of great importance that these decisions be taken after discussions among teachers and between teachers and pupils at the classroom level. According to the general idea, the pupil as well as the teacher must be involved in planning classroom work. Pupils should be trained for participation through teaching.

c. In the choice of curricula?

The Turkish school system is quite uniform; a consequence of the fact that decisions on goals and guidelines, and content and organisation of education are taken at government level. Besides, the National Board of Education issues comments on and interpretations of these decisions.

The curricula of all schools are prepared by the Ministry of Education as projects. The project teams consist of researchers, teacher-trainers, teachers and specialists.

3. The Turkish educational system is centralised. The Ministry of Education determines the main aims of education and prepares regulations, school statutes and curricula as well as carrying out decisions. The National Board of Education issues directions in interpretations of overall aims.

The teachers participate inasmuch as they have free choice of the material and methods within the general syllabus. In order to make the most suitable choice for the needs and aptitudes of a particular class, this choice is made after discussing the questions with the pupils.

At secondary level, the teachers' council participates in the planning of the selective courses offered within the general curricula by discussion at the teachers' meeting.

Pupils participate:

a. in planning what to study during the school year,

b. in planning their own study projects,

c. in choosing working materials,

d. in evaluation (to some degree).

Parents participate in some activities through parent-teacher associations.

4. In Turkey, the most influential obstacles used to be tradition, sociological factors, administrative structures, regulations and all kinds of authoritarian teaching.

Now, the local directors of education, school principals and teachers are gradually becoming counsellors and sources of information; the school is moving toward a more open, co-operative community; the parents are taking an increasing interest in school life.

5. Participation becomes beneficial both in structured forms and teaching methods in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary levels.

6. In Turkey we do not have any pilot schemes for participation.

APPENDIX II

CASE STUDIES

A. *Belgium*

A description of the development of an example of participation in administration over the last sixteen years. Changes in structures, in the school population (such as the ratio of boarders to day pupils and of boys to girls), in the mentalities of all those involved are among the factors in the development of actual living conditions in the school. It falls to the schools' administrators to preserve among these sometimes conflicting trends the essential aim of the "preparation for dialogue and responsibility".

B. *Denmark*

A form of organisation greatly altering the distribution of power within a school. Whereas in other Danish *gymnasier* power is concentrated in the head teacher and (to a lesser extent) the board of teachers, here the centre of gravity is in the "school council" and a "co-ordinating committee". A representative of the Ministry of Education ensures that certain ministerial regulations (such as those relating to the equivalence of certificates) are observed.

The Advedøre experiment, which started in 1974, will last six years at the most. The present chairman of the co-ordinating committee, who has been re-elected, is a 17-year-old girl studying science.

C. *Scotland*

The Scottish contribution is in two parts. Firstly, there is an account of an experiment in co-operation between the primary school at Dyce and a community centre completed in 1972.

The very infrastructure of the school and the efforts made to ensure its integration in a new community are greatly facilitating various forms of discussion, concertation and participation.

The second part of the contribution describes by concrete examples the everyday life of the primary school at Windlaw, Glasgow. Far from falling back on the "safe" positions offered by its educational mission, this school seeks – and finds – steady co-operation on the part of parents . . . and pupils.

The social and professional contacts among the persons involved in the school and between the school and the outside world are used as natural elements in an educational venture.

D. *France*

In September 1974 five secondary schools embarked on an operation aimed at controlled implementation of the official directives of 1968 and 1971 on institutionalised participation.

The pupils' representatives are the keystone of this operation. An indispensable minimum condition for securing their interest is precise and relevant information.

The organisation of democratic elections is shown to involve both research and action: research into pupils' motives, with observation of their reactions to the proposals made, and action centred on the observed facts and animated by a human and educational ideal.

E. *Switzerland*

An assessment of two years' experience of classroom participation at the Elysée secondary school in Lausanne.

Various fields are examined and the results are evaluated. Some advice and prudent warnings are given. Certain needs are affirmed.

The cases described below have at least two features in common. Firstly, they provide tangible illustrations of how several forms and levels of participation may exist despite obstacles and resistance. In each case we note, as a kind of natural necessity, a few people providing the creative impetus.

Secondly, all the reports make some form of assessment indicating increased interest, satisfaction and preparation for society, three vital supports for development of the personality.

A. BELGIUM

Participation at the state teacher training college (École normale) at Couvin

To report on the development and current situation of the co-management scheme begun in 1959 is to describe a long chapter in the life of a continually evolving system influenced by structural changes and the external events which have marked education and Western society in general in the last fifteen years.

While the original aim has not altered in essence, it has often had to be adjusted to keep pace with the changes mentioned above. We would add that the ratio of boarders to day pupils and of boys to girls has also been greatly affected by the way in which the parents' living habits have evolved and by the fact that schooling now takes place on five days instead of the original six.

Let us say straightaway that the fact that the same type of management has been maintained through thick and thin, true to the primary aim of "preparation for dialogue and responsibility", is sufficient proof that this educational approach fulfils a basic need of modern youth and is shared by the educationists and teachers working at Couvin.

a. 1959–61

The basic document immediately proved to be too ambitious, for the mentalities of students and adults were equally unready to accept this new technique. It took over three years of effort to vitalise relationships, and during that time few pupils ventured to take part in the new scheme, about which they had misgivings. The representatives who accepted the tasks prescribed never exceeded 4 % of the pupils aged between 15 and 19.

b. 1962–72

In 1962 the growth in the number of tasks, the opening of new departments and the gradual infiltration of the pupils into the actual school structure led to the first revision of the original system. The number of representatives was increased and the departments became more specialised.

During this second period, which lasted until 1972, 15 % of the pupils assumed responsibilities for education, finance, administration, organisation, co-ordination and resident and non-resident students. An increasingly complex and weighty edifice was thereby created.

All aspects of college life were affected, including methodology, since the opening of the social sciences section affected the working methods and interdisciplinarity.

In 1969 closed-circuit television brought a plethora of facilities and thus of participation.

In 1970, however, the excessive number of activities finally brought about the withdrawal of certain teachers and many students from the experiment.

The college was still run on a participation basis, but a distinction was made between the *permanent level* (the twenty-two persons mainly responsible) and the *occasional level* (the majority of the group). This led to a dangerous cleavage, with the former working in depth and the latter displaying merely surface reactions. It became necessary to restore unity and adjust the organisation.

c. 1973–75

This was done by the 1973-75 generation. The work is still progressing and the first effects are now clearly visible.

The percentage of pupils carrying responsibilities was reduced to 6 %, i.e. twelve (eight upper secondary students and four students in educational psychology).

There is thus a two-tier organisation (the 15-18 and 18-20 age-groups), the administrative meetings being joint ones.

When the problems concern only one of the groups, meetings are split but a report is always presented to the other group for information, and it may reserve the right to intervene in a joint meeting if necessary.

Furthermore, the systems differ from each other: total co-management for educational psychology students and participation for those in the human sciences. This means that the trainee teachers have to give their opinions in *all* the sectors of school activity peculiar to them. In the human sciences, however, reference is made to the document of the general directorate of studies, which keeps some questions for the administration and the teaching staff alone (subject-matter, class councils, general method, functions). Naturally, those in charge can always ask for information and arrange for a general discussion if they consider that the majority of pupils do not agree with the decisions taken.

The general assembly is then convened and a debate prepared by the various parties involved is opened.

Besides the leading group of twelve pupils there is the college's general board, which comprises representatives of all sectors (primary and secondary teachers, educationists, workmen and technical staff, pupils and parents). It has twenty-one members.

A news-sheet, "Contact", is circulated to interested persons four times a year, in October, January, March and June. It provides general information, and when necessary obtains opinions on matters under consideration (five-day week, timetables, study visits, out-of-school activities, methods).

B. DENMARK

Avedoere – an experiment in democracy

As most other countries, Denmark has witnessed a growing interest in giving pupils in primary and secondary schools a share in decision-making on a local level. Student participation is the catchword from nursery school through university.

Much has already been done: at the universities the students have a 50 % influence on all levels. In the upper secondary school system (the 16 to 19 year olds) there are two main kinds of student participation: it is laid down in the regulations that each class and its subject teacher decide their working schedule and the contents of their studies together, and also decide which part of it shall be the curriculum for written and oral examinations, and at all schools there is a council with an equal number of teachers and students, with the headmaster as chairman, which discusses and decides questions of common interest and about community life in general *(samarbejdsudvalget)*.

While student participation in the class in its best forms is real and genuine, the students feel that their opportunities of influencing decisions about the whole school are too small, and the council described above is often considered "a dummy".

In 1968 a commission was set up to inquire into the possibilities of establishing experiments in school democracy and in educational development at two state schools (state-owned upper secondary schools). The commission recommended that two schools be selected for this purpose in the Copenhagen area to make it possible for students (and parents) who did not want to partake in the experiment to move to a nearby school, and also to make it easy for groups of specialists, e.g. from the university, to follow the experiments. Apart from this hundreds of educational experiments take place every year at ordinary "gymnasia".

The two schools chosen for the experiments are Herlev Statsskole for educational development, and Avedoere Statsskole for experiments in student participation. At an ordinary Danish "gymnasium" (upper secondary school) there are three centres of power: the headmaster, who is the representative of the Ministry of Education, and who has full responsibility in general for the education of the students; a council of all teachers, which decides the budget, experiments, and votes on advice to students concerning pass or fail, and the council of teachers and students which has been described above. By far the greatest part of influence rests with the headmaster, although important decisions are also made by the teachers' council. Student partici-

pation is limited to classroom decisions and decisions about "community life in general".

Compared with this the model built for Avedoere is fundamentally different.

Avedoere is ruled by three equal groups or parties:

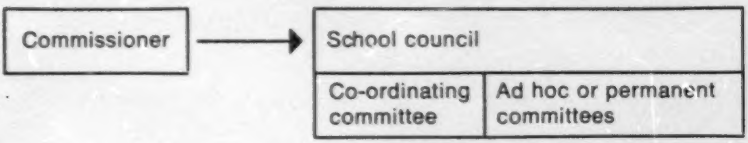
1. *the school council,* consisting of all teachers, students and TAPs (technical and administrative personnel), deciding under a one-man-one-vote rule,

2. *a co-ordinating committee,* elected for six months at a time and consisting of a chairman (elected by the school council), three teachers, three students, and one TAP (elected by their respective bodies), and

3. *a commissioner* (appointed by the Minister of Education).

It is possible for the school council to set up permanent or ad hoc committees to deal with specific problems, but they will always be responsible to the council and their work will be supervised by it.

The sketch below will show the centres of power and their interplay.



In principle the school council can discuss and decide all questions, but the regulations laid down by the Minister (*Bekendtgørelse om særlige styrelsesregler for Avedøre Statsskole,* No. 450, 30 August 1974) contain three limitations:

1. as a protection of minorities it is laid down that questions concerning single persons can only be taken up by the school council when the person involved has agreed to it;

2. as a guarantee that the final examinations at Avedoere have the same competence as examinations passed at other "gymnasia", the control of examinations is placed with the commissioner (Danish student examinations are centrally set and state controlled with outside control of both oral and written tests);

3. questions about "hiring and firing" and some few questions which particularly concern working conditions for personnel (TAPs and

teachers) are dealt with in the co-ordinating committee (where no single group has an inbuilt majority).

The model with a co-ordinating committee and a school council resembles the model which can be found in a federal state system where one chamber will represent the union and common interests, whereas the other will have an equal number of representatives of all the states or groups which make up the federation. The idea stems from a thought that a school has large areas of common interest, and some (smaller) areas where it is possible to identify groups with genuine differences of interest. This comes (among other things) from the fact that the students will be at the school for two or three years while TAPs and teachers might be there for forty. This part of the decision-making is placed in the co-ordinating committee which may then function as a mediation body. The chairman of this committee is a very important person, because she is elected directly by the school council (there are even rules of recall), and is responsible to the council and not to any single group. She is also the official representative of the school (the "hello-goodbye person"). The chairman at present is a 17-year-old science student (a girl named Joan) who has been re-elected once. There is little doubt that the chairmanship will normally go to a student, and Joan's very able handling of the job may well have created a tradition of electing a girl, altough boys are in a slight majority at most Danish schools and also at Avedoere.

The regulations for Avedoere were made by the Minister of Education following recommendations from a new committee set up in spring 1973. The recommendations were unanimous from a committee consisting of representatives from the teachers' union, the two student organisations, and from the school (headmaster, teacher, student) and the Directorate of Upper Secondary Education. Some teachers at Avedoere have since complained that the experiment is not far-reaching enough as long as the one-man-one-vote rule is not completely adhered to. In particular they would want to see the commissioner as the representative of the state disappear altogether. Behind this discussion is the old question of direct versus representative government.

The experiment at Avedoere will go on for a maximum of six years (i.e. until July 1980). Hopefully it will bring results which will make it possible to change everyday school life for students all over the country. The regulations were set up as an attempt to reform, not as a signal for revolution. The intention is to keep Avedoere a "normal" school in a normal residential district in a suburb of Copenhagen. Otherwise the results might be too sectarian so that they cannot be generalised.

C. UNITED KINGDOM (Scotland)

1. *Dyce primary school complex and community centre: Grampian Region*

The Dyce complex

i. *The lay-out*

The concept of the primary school/community complex will only be fully appreciated when the other educational and social amenities envisaged for Dyce, as it expands, are in existence.

The primary school/community centre complex, which will in time be at the heart of the town, was completed in 1972. There are five units in all – three open-plan units, each providing primary education (i.e. for children aged 5 to 12) for 300 pupils.

ii. *The primary school*

The basis of education for participation is laid in the education and environment provided in the three open-plan units each containing a cross-section of the 5-12 group in the community, and a team of nine teaching staff working alongside one another. There is one head teacher responsible for the management and educational direction of primary education, and three assistant head teachers.

The physical design of the primary school campus together with the mode of deployment of staff encourages, in fact necessitates, constant discussion and co-operation between different groups of teachers and between different groups of pupils. Pupils and teachers alike are in a position to see and hear each other at work, to co-ordinate their programmes of work, to group and regroup according to particular purpose, to mingle socially without constraint, and to practise shared responsibility for the environment in which they learn.

To strengthen participation, there are more formal monthly meetings between each assistant head teacher and staff who teach at particular stages, and a formal, full meeting of staff with the head teacher every two to three months.

Membership of the association is open to all parents or guardians and teachers; there is a main committee of twelve, ten elected from the community and two from the school staff, the maximum period of office being three years. Notification of agendas are sent out to all members at least two weeks prior to a full meeting.

The main aims of the association are "to provide for close co-operation between school and parents", "to further the understanding

of present-day education relative to the needs of the children", and "to further integrate the school with the community".

iii. *The community centre*

The centre is managed by a member of staff of the community service provided by the education authority. The committee, which is appointed by the education authority, comprises a local county councillor, a local district councillor, the chairman of the local youth and community panel, a representative of the Director of Education, a representative of the organiser of community service, one member of the part-time staff of the centre, the manager of the centre, the head teacher of the primary school, and six active centre members selected so as to ensure a balance of age and sex and the participation of at least two people under the age of 18.

iv. *The policy of the Grampian Education Authority in a national context*

"The aims of the councils seem to be foster local democratic processes by involving the population in general, and parents in particular, in meaningful engagement in the processes of education."

2. *Windlaw primary school, Glasgow: Strathclyde Region*

As yet, it is a minority of Scottish schools which have been deliberately designed to make joint provision for school and community.

We hold countless meetings, formal and informal, and at all levels. They take place at morning and afternoon breaks, lunch hours, during school time and in the evenings. Sometimes these discussions are with teachers only, sometimes with parents, sometimes in groups, sometimes one-to-one. We have slowly forged links in a chain which includes school auxiliaries, cleaners, clerical staff, janitor, parents and teachers. We have learned to respect one another, to learn from one another and to give support and understanding when one link is under pressure. Slowly and sometimes painfully we have welded ourselves into a team, and, of course, our pupils are our most important concern.

Litter is a real problem. The school has its own anti-litter committee and each member is responsible for his or her street. They organise street teams and school competitions. We have tried to form committees of parents with varying degrees of success.

Our old-age pensioners are part of our community. As often as we can, about once a month, we invite them into school for tea and a concert. Our senior classes deliver the invitations, welcome the

visitors, and serve them. They introduce the items and we now have a number of children with sufficient confidence to make a speech in public without any preparation. Some of our pensioners are ready to help us by speaking to groups of children about their childhood in days of long ago.

Parents' evenings are held regularly. After meeting the class teacher and discussing the child and admiring the work, parents have tea served in a relaxed atmosphere. As many members of staff as can be are present. At these meetings we find how and when parents can help us. Since most of our parents work or have small children at home, very few of them are available during the day but there are always plenty to help on weekend or evening outings.

So teachers and parents gain a better understanding of one another's problems. With this has come a deepening sympathy on both sides.

On a Tuesday evening there is a school club. There are groups for baking, crochet, dressmaking, knitting, handwork, handcrafts, painting, chess, games. All these groups are run by parents while a few teachers attend in a supporting role. The club is a peaceful place although as many as a hundred boys and girls may be present. . . . Our playgrounds are open in the evenings and at weekends. Most of our parents feel at home in the school. They are organising dances which are attended not only by staff and parents but neighbours who have no connection with the school.

Obviously all this coming together has broken down barriers and prejudice. We have all had to change our attitudes many times and we have learned to accept greater responsibility.

D. FRANCE

The introduction of class delegates and participation: an experiment in the Grenoble educational district

I. *Pupils and participation — the background to an experiment*

Having already had several years' experience in direct participation, a few Grenoble teachers, who were soon joined by some head teachers and senior educational advisers, showed special interest in the new type of participation institutionalised by the official regulations of 1968 and 1971.

In October 1972, therefore, a team was formed in Grenoble from several disciplines and categories in the "Centre régional de documentation pédagogique" (CRDP). Utilising the work carried out by a researcher during the two previous years, this team proposed to a few schools that had volunteered for the purpose certain action which for the sake of convenience we shall call the "CRDP experiment". These proposals drew attention to the exceptionally valuable civic and social education that could result from application of the official regulations in a true spirit of participation. Two years later these suggestions became strikingly relevant when the age of majority was lowered to 18 years.

The experiment which we are about to describe briefly should thus be seen in the above light. It was the outcome of a series of analyses, which it was able to refine and supplement. As the result of actual experience of direct participation with or among pupils, it helped to clarify the conditions in which a type of school participation by delegation could really achieve its goals.

This would put more clearly the problem of training for participation.

II. *Description of the experiment*

A. *Participation by adults*

In September 1974 and again in January 1975 the CRDP research team supplied to each *lycée* a "pilot document" intended to assist the adults who were to implement the action proposed. It was hoped in this way to give some consistency to the experiment in the different types of school (two classical and modern *lycées*, one technical *lycée* and two comprehensive *lycées*) and to synchronise to some extent the action to be taken. This would assist observation of the results and their possible quantification.

B. *A key moment in the operation of the system of delegates: the elections*

The way in which the delegates are elected makes their representativeness highly variable. It was therefore desirable to bring home to the electors the importance of what they were about to do. It was necessary to supply information, promote discussions and make the pupils think about the subject before the polling date.

In October 1974, therefore, about a week before the elections, 8000 leaflets produced by the research team of the Grenoble CRDP with the help of a group of pupils' delegates (chairmen or former chairmen of delegates' councils) were circulated in the five schools taking part in the experiment. Meetings about the delegates' functions were held in some of the schools, mostly on the initiative of the previous year's delegates.

The CRDP research team had prepared a "delegate's file" which they supplied to the five schools. Its main contents were certain official texts on school organisation and pupil representation.

The elections were taken extremely seriously by the pupils in the five schools in question, and very few showed indifference or hostility to the institution of delegates. On the contrary, the pupils looked for some stronger and more effective institutional form for their representation.

C. *How the system works*

The tendency described above appeared in varying degrees in the five *lycées*, but everywhere the result has been that the system is in more or less constant operation.

Delegates' committees are functioning with varying degrees of success in the classical and modern *lycées*. Meetings are held on the initiative either of the delegates or of the head teacher or the senior educational advisers responsible for a given level. Contact is being established with the delegates of the other protagonists in school life: the teachers and parents.

From the practical point of view, in all five schools the delegates ask for a place in which to meet, a notice-board and facilities for circulating information. There is much contact with the administration and the "animateurs". The sociological survey conducted in May 1974, indeed, shows that there is a better understanding of relations with the administration, teachers and supervisors in the *lycées* taking part in the experiment than in other schools.

D. *The January votes of confidence – the delegates on the councils*

One aspect of this activity was the holding of "votes of confidence" in January. Here again it was necessary for the operation to be taken seriously in all the classes, and the teachers' help was therefore needed.

From the figures obtained this aim seems to i ave been achieved in both 1974 and 1975. The proportion of delegates .ho did not keep the confidence o' their electors varies from 2 % to 34 % in 1974 and from 10 % to 32 % in 1975. detailed examination of the figures for each school and class show. how the working of the pupil representation system depends on a . umber of factors, including age, school class, type of teaching and sex.

Here too the sociological survey in May 1974 is revealing. Nearly 100 % of pupils in the *lycées* taking part in the experiment acknowledge the need to have delegates in the class council, and 75 % of them think the delegates have a voice there, but only 29 % think that any notice is taken of what they say.

77 % of the pupils want to have delegates on the governing board, but only 25 % believe their interventions are heeded while 13 % think they have positive results. Significantly, this last figure is slightly lower in the *lycées* where the experiment is taking place than elsewhere, as though the awareness which the experiment creates among pupils has made them more concerned that participation should be effective. The majority thus consider that the results obtained in concertation and decision-making bodies are at present inadequate. Although participation is not confined to these bodies, there is certainly a problem here.

III. *Lessons to be learnt from the current experiment – opinions and prospects*

The comment made above may mark one of the present limits of the CRDP experiment. The experiment certainly seems to have caused the election of delegates to be taken more seriously, and to have helped to enlist a greater number of motivated pupils. It has also helped the system to work throughout the year and explains, at least partly, certain action taken by the pupils aimed at even more institutionalised representation. It has created more frequent contact between the delegates and the administration and "animateurs". In a word, it now seems that efforts to promote participation should no longer be confined to four or five schools in an education district.

Even allowing for the risk of conflict between organisations within a school and the risk of manipulation of the pupils as a whole by one or more such organisations, it seems essential to maintain and develop a system of pupil representation in schools. Such a system should enable everyone, whether politically committed or not, to express himself democratically and to have a share in the running of the school's concertation and decision-making bodies. It in no way lessens the scope of pupils' organisations for representing their members. But it gives shape to a major educational project.

What makes it possible to "manipulate" pupils is in fact a lack of awareness of the problems of participation, particularly participation by delegation.

That is why from the outset the research team stressed the importance of the class and the stimulating role which delegates can play in creating a genuine group with plentiful personal links.

In carrying out its work, the Grenoble research team had the feeling that it was observing a decisive development in school life and adopting towards it, as far as lay within its power, an attitude appropriate both to the observed facts and to an educational and human ideal. Participation is one of the expressions of that ideal.

E. SWITZERLAND

It seems to us to be of particular interest to describe an experiment conducted at the Elysée secondary school in Lausanne and generally called "Operation Elysee" (OP-ELY).

Operation Elysée – the Elysée secondary school in Lausanne

Ever since 1969, when optional courses were introduced, the Elysée school has tried in carrying out its educational reforms to offer pupils better opportunities for participation.

In 1973, after eight months of joint work, the teachers and pupils on the OP-ELY committees proved that pupil participation in school reform was not only possible but fruitful.

When the new school year started at the end of August 1973, the headmaster and the teachers' conference officially introduced participation in the senior classes.

The concept of participation is complex, for participation means sharing. What do the pupils share with their teachers? It may be the right to voice opinions, it may be initiative in research or it may be the power of decision.

After over two years' experience, there appear to be ten fields of classroom activity in which pupils may participate. The classes actually concerned are those between the third and the sixth year.

1. *Definition of the aims of education*

Inevitably the pupils have little power of decision with regard to general aims. To some extent, however, they can weigh up these aims and establish priorities.

Several Elysée teachers observe that this enables pupils to adopt a more constructive attitude towards the work required of them, since they understand its purpose and significance better.

2. *Choice of subjects for study and methods; planning of work*

It is this type of participation which is currently most favoured by some teachers, and it seems to be equally valued by the great majority of pupils.

Clearly, it cannot often be left to pupils to choose the subjects they are to study, especially when they know nothing about them or about the approach proper to each.

Generally speaking, pupils are particularly anxious to have a say in the planning of work.

3. *Exploration of subjects, research*

By placing pupils in a well-chosen situation (e.g. supplying them with material or work instruments), a teacher can help them to make their own individual or, better, group observations and discoveries on which to work out sound hypotheses and even test them.

4. *Planning and production of material which can be used in the classroom*

This field of participation is an extension of the previous one: the pupils' research which will be independent to a greater or lesser degree will naturally lead to summaries, questionnaires and audio-visual assemblages which show the work done and also furnish the class with useful material.

5. *Presentation of subjects to the class, teaching*

Fairly often the teacher asks one or more pupils to assist in the teaching or the presentation of a subject to the class. The teaching given by the pupils can be very effective; it is usually followed with interest, and those who give it derive the most benefit from it.

6. *Assessment of individual work*

The vast field of assessment is one well suited to pupil participation, whether the assessment is general or bears on a specific point.

7. *Classroom life*

This field includes everything connected with the classroom atmosphere, the relations between pupils and their relations with the teachers, working conditions, order etc. It also comprises what is called discipline, which should become self-discipline: each pupil's control of his own behaviour in the general interest.

The introduction of an hour's "contact" in 43 out of the 46 classes enables the teacher and his pupils to have a more rewarding relationship than is usual between teachers and taught. One teacher says that the hour of contact is a very important educational aid in approaching participation, one which enables some essential points of classroom life to be tackled without the work thereby suffering.

8. *Assessment of work and classroom life*

Research workers who try to assess school activity agree that in general its efficiency is small and that there is an enormous loss of time and energy. Participation by pupils in assessing the work and

life of the class is intended partly to make them aware of the problems involved in the working of the school "machine" and thus help to solve them.

9. *Classrooom life outside usual lessons – out-of-school activities*

It is here that pupil participation is most natural. Quite often classes organise, practically on their own, a school outing, a week's schooling in the mountains or a ski camp. The teacher's role is to do specific things at the pupils' request and above all to ensure that the institutional limits are respected, that the decisions taken are applied, that safety precautions are taken etc. One recent experiment, which most of those who have taken part ask to be repeated, is the "extra-curricular day". This should perhaps rather be called a "non-routine day", since it is within the limits of the curriculum that such a day has proved to be most profitable.

The aims of the "non-routine day" are firstly to give teachers and classes an opportunity to run fairly big projects jointly, and secondly to carry out, by sustained activity, work which could hardly (if at all) be completed within normal lessons.

The first such day took place on 17 December 1974. In order to be able to participate, classes had to work out in advance, with the help of one or more teachers willing to take responsibility for the day, a precise project contained within the bounds of school activities and leading to a tangible achievement: a written report, an audio-visual assemblage, exhibition panels, technical or artistic objects, shows etc.

10. *School-parents relations*

The class drew up aims and an agenda for a meeting between parents, teachers and pupils. The chair was taken by two pupils. Part of the time was devoted to discussions in tripartite groups, whose conclusions were drawn up by a working party and communicated to all persons concerned as a basis for a later meeting.

Plans and prospects

In the light of the foregoing we can try to define the conditions which must be met in order that, at the Elysée school in particular, pupil participation may have all the positive results that may be expected of it.

1. More motivation

The additional effort entailed in participation will only be accepted by the two parties concerned if it is regarded as worth while.

2. *More information*

In order to want to participate one has to be adequately informed of the many possibilities offered by participation. One must have a clear idea of what is at stake – that is, one must know that school life offers only one alternative to it. Things are either run by the teacher alone or responsibility is shared with the pupils; either there is authoritarian teaching or there is participation. Furthermore, participation implies striking a balance between rights and obligations.

What is needed is not so much further information in the ordinary sense as opportunities for discussion and work together, pointing to the participation that it is desired to introduce. Theoretical explanations are not enough to get the idea of participation across; it is by practising it that one discovers its value.

3. *More practical opportunities for participation*

Participation by pupils, especially in the early running-in stage, requires time and special resources. We should not forget to mention the existence of the "ideas bank", which already contains a number of suggestions that may encourage participation (in the form of index cards).

4. *More training of teachers*

If pupils are going to participate, the teachers must have, besides their training in their subject, some knowledge of animation and some experience of group dynamics. They must therefore be able to meet other people engaged in the same process, in order to compare notes and look together for solutions to the problems encountered.

APPENDIX III

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